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- GRAN TURISMO 2000
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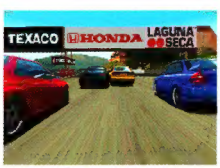

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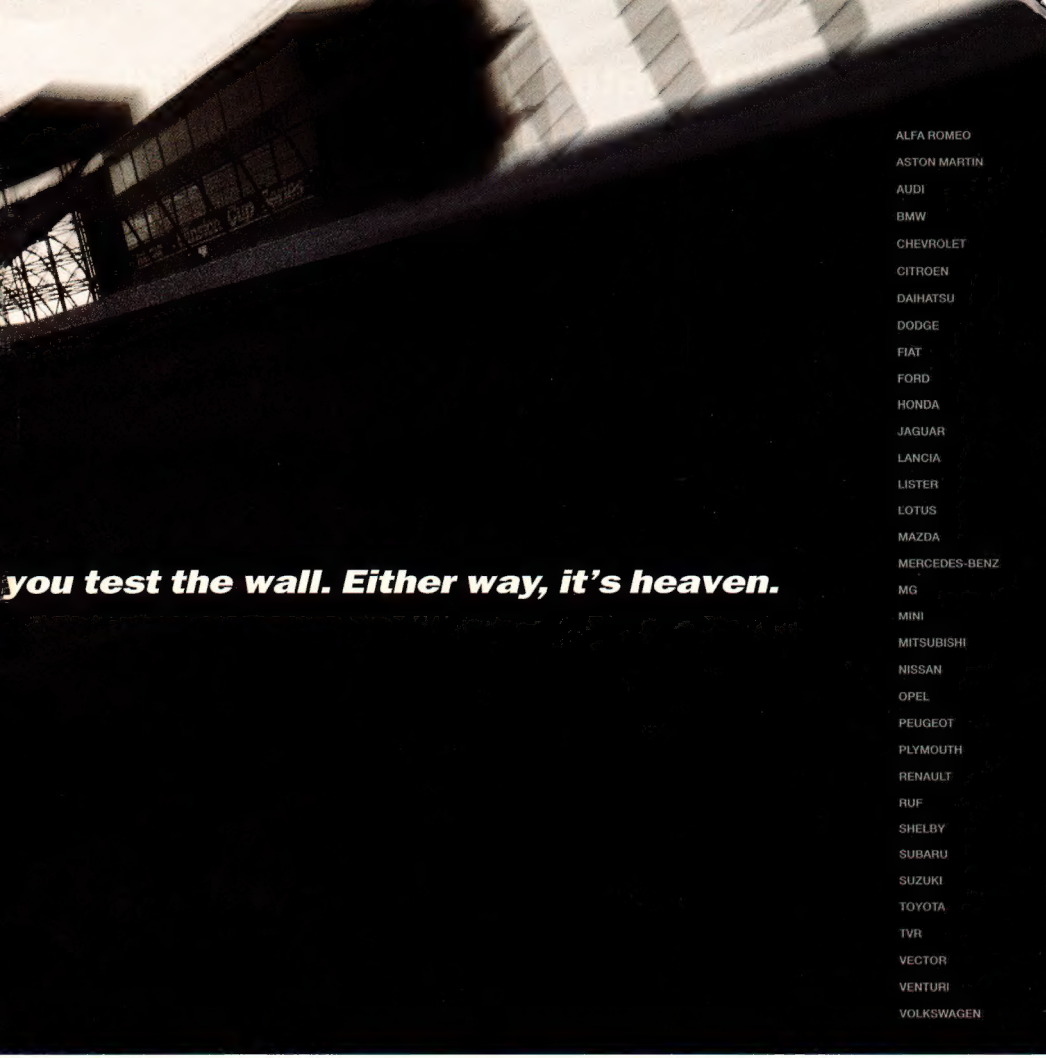

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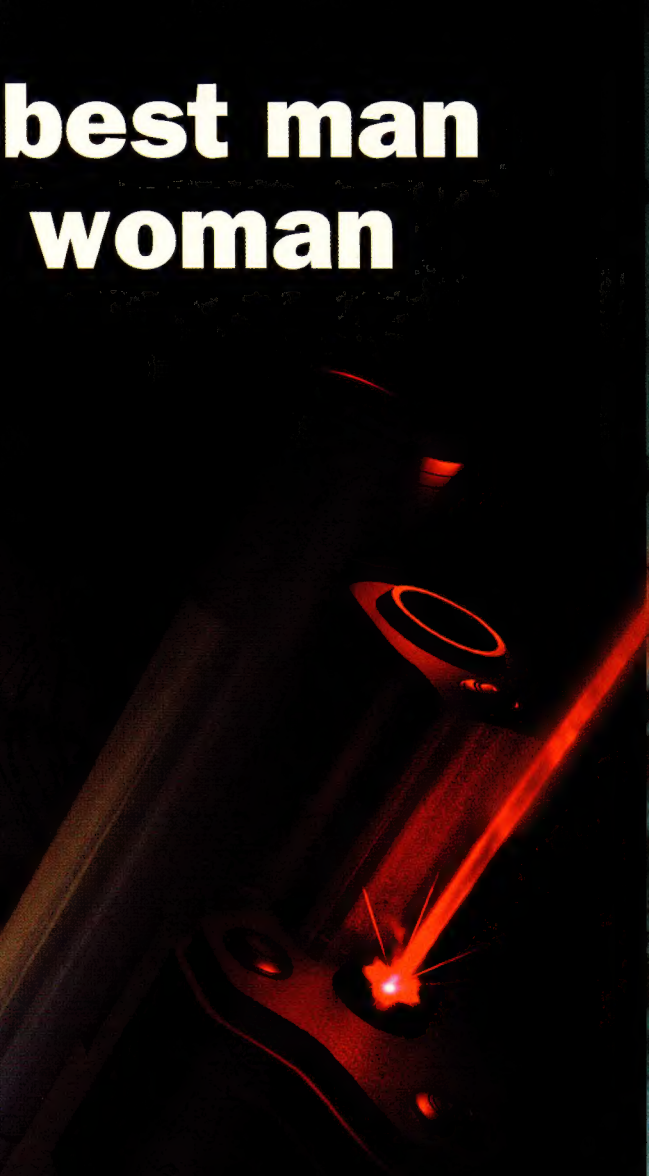

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N64

EDITORIAL

By John Davison • john_davison@zd.com

"Exciting" Doesn't Begin To Describe It

No one ever expected the first Tony Hawk game to be as big a deal as it was. The whole world went mad for it—and the only skateboarder who most people have ever heard of became even more famous. This month we're lucky enough to have the exclusive first look at the sequel, and we got a chance to game in—and things just haven't been the same since. The majority of the launch games are a bit on the crappy side, but Ridge Racer V and the Gran Turismo 2000 demo more than make up for it. It's such a shame that the U.S. launch still seems so far away. If you're really jonesing for a machine though...don't buy one on import yet.

"We knew it was going to be big...we knew the machine was going to be incredible, but nothing prepared us for the giddy sense of excitement"

sit down with the killer-coders at top development studio Neversoft and also with Tony himself. Check out the feature to see all the cool details on the game, plus **some fantastic pix of Tony and pals doing skate tricks on Neversoft's conference table.**

As if all that isn't exciting enough though, the other big story this month was the launch of PlayStation2. We knew it was going to be big...we knew the machine was going to be incredible, but nothing prepared us for the giddy sense of excitement we felt when Chris Johnston returned from his *EGM*-funded shopping trip to Tokyo on March 5 with a big bag full of systems and games for us to check out. **We were like a bunch of giggly school girls** when we popped the first

The prices are still artificially high. If you wait a month or so, the crazy asking prices will drop. I'd avoid eBay too. **We saw PS2s going for over a grand in the first week and the things only cost $350 with the current yen exchange rate.** Don't get ripped off!

Before I finish up this month I want to bid a fond farewell to some excellent people. *EGM* has provided great opportunities for a lot of talented people over the years and it's always sad to see them leave. Shoe, Che and Wat are all moving on to further their careers in video game journalism this month. They'll be sorely missed, but we hope you'll join us in wishing them the very best of luck in their new positions.

John Davison

Contributing Writers

Michael Price

Mike is our resident "real life" violence expert. He's a black belt in more martial arts than we knew existed—not to mention being the AIC light-heavyweight kickboxing champion and star of an upcoming chop-socky flick. We've mentioned before that he threatened us with violence, but he's never actually put his dukes up. So now we just think he's a pussy.

James Mielke

Below is Milky's "kissy face." Isn't it beautiful? Apparently the chicks love it. This, combined with his New York street smarts, are making him a big hit now that he's moved from the Big Apple to be the resident Previews guy at our sister publication, *www.videogames.com* in S.F. The Milkman also runs the Letters page there...so check it out and tell him you've seen his picture.

Andrew Pfister

The 'Pfist of Doom' is still working his way through school and as such continues to humiliate us with his general knowledge skills. A recent alcohol-fueled You Don't Know Jack session at Shoe's resulted in Andrew being the only player boasting a positive score. Let this be a message: Stay in school, it stops you from looking like a dork in front of your peers.

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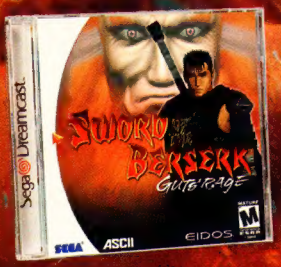

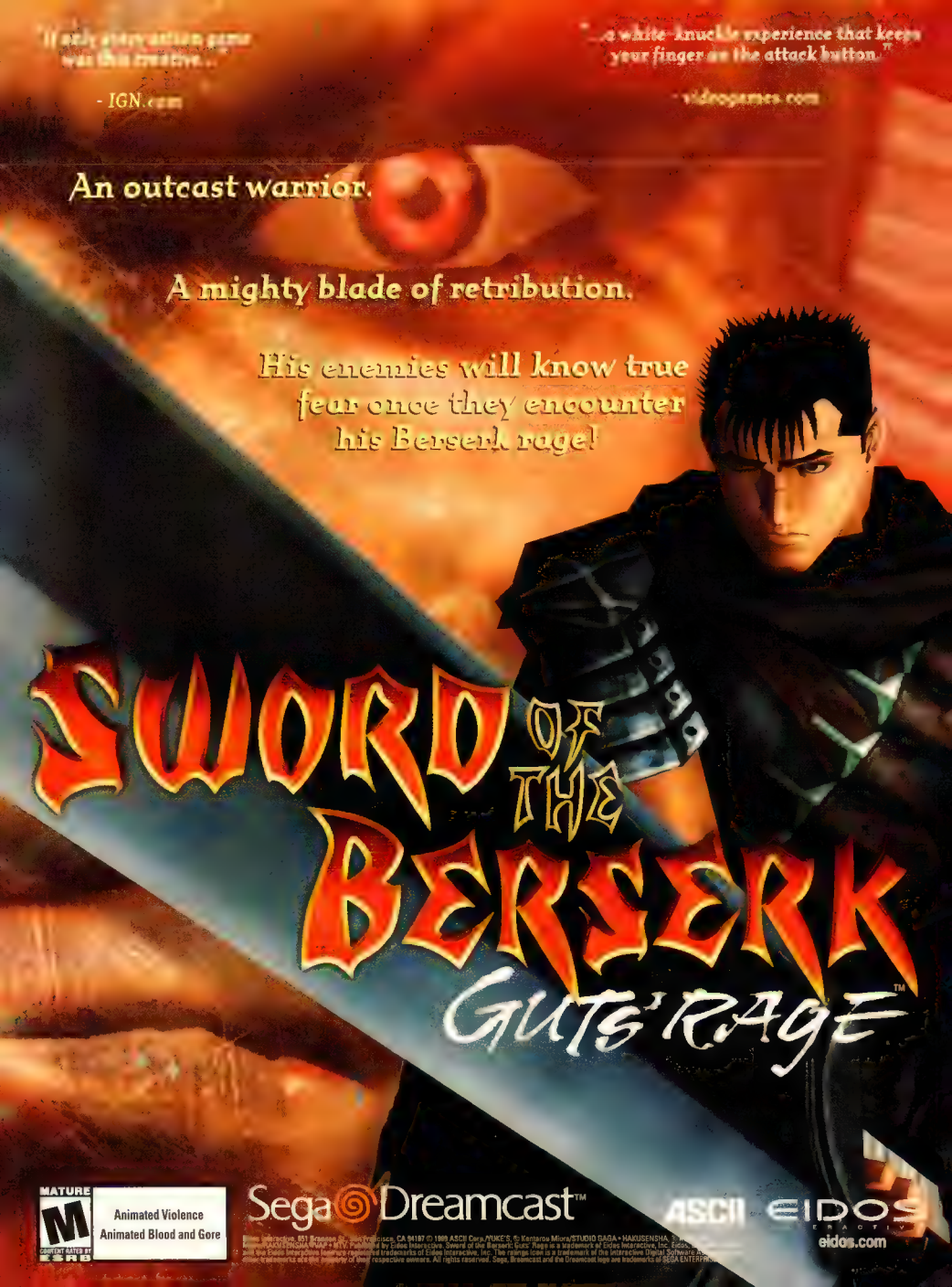
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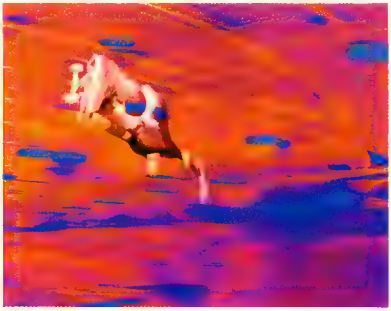

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 If Tony Hawk is the Michael Jordan of skateboarding, then his game is the Michael Jordan of skateboarding games. And the PlayStation original sold so well, Michael Jordan's probably playing it. Our 10-page feature shows that, yes, the sequel's even better. **pg 130**

Sword of the Beserk We preview and review this blood-fest. **pg 64 & 145**

Sega GT The Dreamcast's answer to PlayStation2's GT2000. **pg 62**

900,000 units later The PS2 launches in Japan, and we were there to pick up our systems. Read all about the system and its games in News this month. **pg 32**

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Holy crap! We have the Japanese PlayStation2 in our office. Read our first impressions and more.

SYSTEM KEY

- Dreamcast
- Nintendo 64
- PlayStation2
- PlayStation
- Game Boy Color
- Neo•Geo Pocket Color
- Arcade

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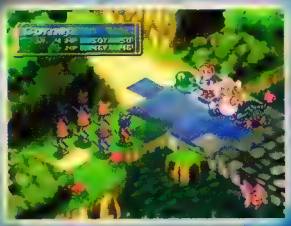
A Musical Adventure



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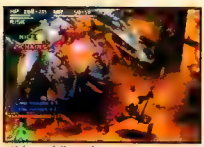

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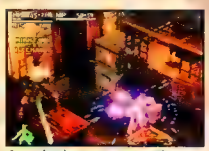

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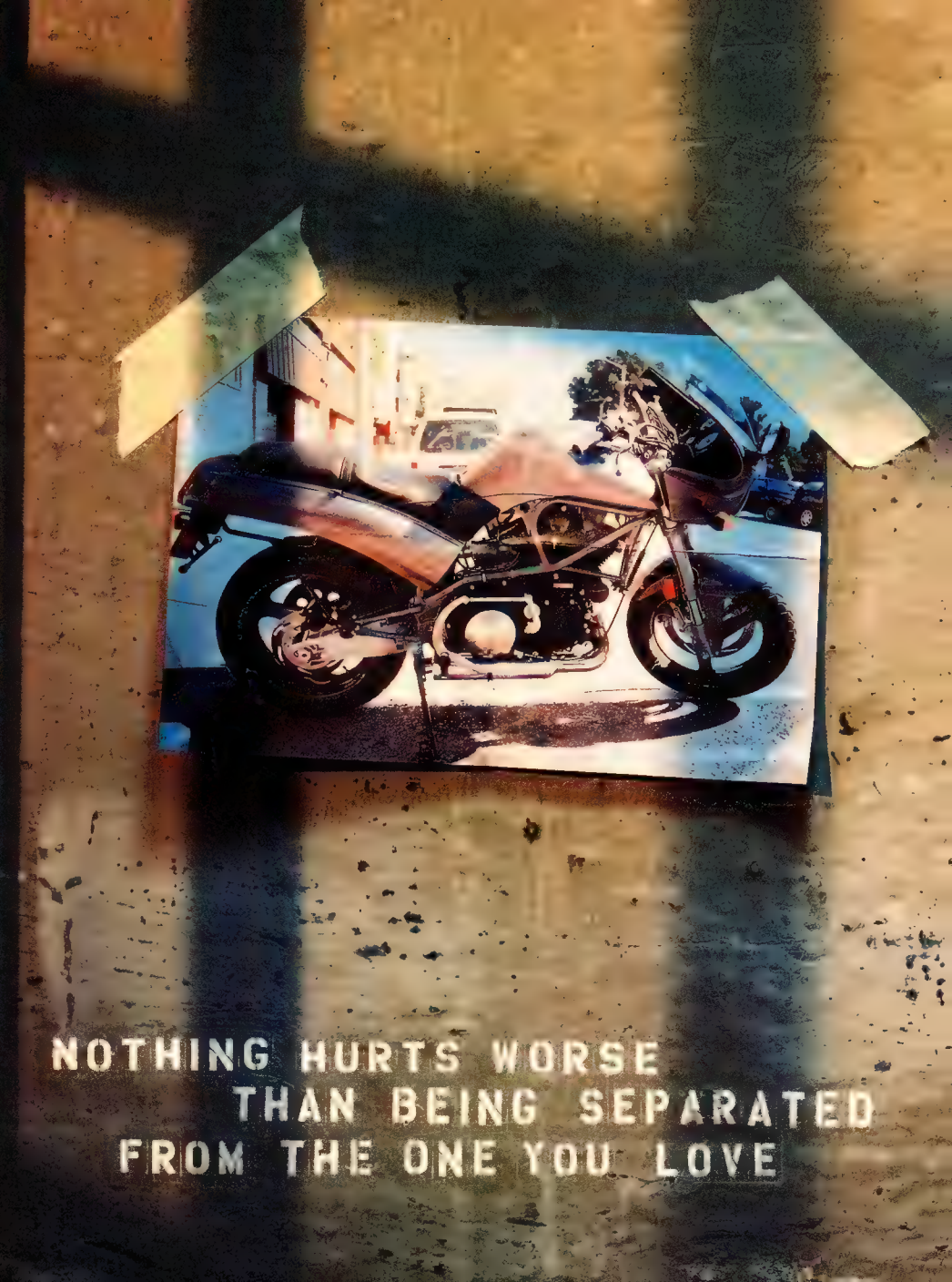
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Letters to the Editors

LETTER FACTS

- **Thing that people thought was our April Fool: Conker's BFD. If you don't believe us check out www.rare.co.uk/recent/games/**
- **Thing that people believed the most: Our Giga Intellivision story. That was the real Fool.**

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Giddy As A School Girl

I think that Sony is about to get more of a fight from Sega than they once thought. I remember the days when the Saturn and the PS1 were our big contenders for the the 32-Bit wars and how, the then underdog, Sony took Sega to the pirate ship and made them pick up the soap. Well, making Sega bend over this time is going to be a bit harder because the Dreamcast is going to kick ass this holiday season. In my opinion, the Dreamcast did so good last year that by this Christmas it could probably plunge to the $150 mark with first-generation titles at $19. The Dreamcast could easily become the PlayStation of the new systems and bring Sega back to number one.

Now I'm not some "Sega is God" freak, I didn't run around in the Genesis days trying to put down Super NES owners or anything like that. In fact, I'm one of the most unbiased gamers you'd ever meet because I own all of the systems from all of the companies and I play them all regularly, including the Saturn imports. I will definitely buy a PS2.

I love the Tekken series and Gran Turismo and I hope the PS2 does as good as the Dreamcast. But with the price of the thing, even though I know it's not far from the original price of the PS1, going up against a near $200 cheaper Dreamcast with an extensive library of games is just not feasible. I know that the DVD capabilities and backward-compatibility with the PS1 will sell many a system. But I already have a DVD player and a PS1 so I'm only interested in what the PS2 can do as a next generation game console.

If I had written this before reading issue #129 I would've placed Nintendo at number three this time around. I have found a new hope in Conker though. If this game is what you say, then I give Nintendo a big pat on the back and an even bigger THANK YOU! After all the years of cutesy Mario games, we finally get a foul-mouthed, bad-assed mascot for the foul-mouthed, bad-assed adults we are. The very idea makes me giddy as a school girl. I salute you Nintendo.

kake_or_deth@hotmail.com

> "Sony took Sega to the pirate ship and made them pick up the soap."

The Dreamcast is doing incredibly well right now...and as far as "balance" across the systems, it's rare that you ever get a situation like the one we have right now. We're excited about the prospect of Conker's BFD too...but Rare may still be yanking our chain—we really don't know.

Congratulations. You win an InterAct controller. You will be receiving a Barracuda (PS), an Alloy Arcade Stick (DC) or a SharkPad Pro 64² (N64).

See page 171 for official rules

Gun Survivor Weirdness

Hopefully you know the answer to this question. I just recently purchased RE-Gun Survivor, and every time I save, it brings me all the way back to the beginning of the game, but with all of the items and guns that I have acquired as I've worked my way through. The whole thing is in Japanese and I'm not really that good when it comes to dealing with Japanese text so that doesn't help. Can you help me out with this? Thanks for your patience.

Steve Silvestri
address unknown

> **"You're actually supposed to run through the game in one sitting."**

In Resident Evil: Gun Survivor, you're actually supposed to run through the game in one sitting. Yeah, no kidding, it's ridiculous—but that's what they wanted the game to be like. Each time you save, it's supposed to put you back at the beginning of the game with all your inventory. The game itself isn't actually particularly long, so that's how you're supposed to do it. The Japanese can sometimes seem somewhat insane :) —*Che*

Ghost in Daria's Shell Effect

I just purchased Fear Effect (very cool) and noticed something oddly familiar about Hana's voice. It sounds like Daria's friend Jane's voice. Very much so when she says "I don't think so." Could it be the same person? I'll leave that to you guys. Plus Hana also looks a lot like Motoko Kusanagi from Ghost In The Shell. Even creepier...both Ghost and Fear Effect are set in Hong Kong around 2030 A.D. So maybe Hana is really a cyborg re-creation of Daria's Jane! Or maybe I just watch too much anime and play too many games.

Matthew Eccles
Denver, CO

We Don't Like Nintendo (Apparently)

Why do you biased freaks print three N64 reviews and 20 PSX and DC reviews when there are more games to review for the N64 than three? And don't say there are not enough games coming out, because there are. It's just that you don't like the games so you don't review them!

noa4ever@hotmail.com

Yes, you're right. We're completely ignoring the tidal wave of N64 releases because we don't like the system. We hate it so much, we put Perfect Dark on the cover last month. Seriously, if you can tell us what we've missed...we'll gladly review them.

That Violence Thing Again

I want you all to know that I am not out to offend, nor am I out to preach, but I need to get this off of my chest. I

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of regular milk, so drink up.
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LETTERS

EGM@zd.com

Send us your thoughts, your wishes, your innermost weirdness...or your pictures, crazy screenshots or photos of bizarre game-related moments.

am an 18-year-old fine arts student up north in British Columbia and an avid gamer. Over the past year, your fine publication has printed numerous articles in reference to the ongoing war between politicians and video game violence. It had seemed to die down until that fateful day at Columbine, and then all of a sudden, the war was back on, claiming that the instigators to all of this youth violence has been because of exposure to violent video games, television and movies. Today (Feb. 29), I caught a news story involving a *GRADE ONE* student who shot and killed another grade one student with a gun the first child brought to school.

Now, I have a hard time buying into the entertainment industry promoting this. No, I would have to say the solution is far simpler than that. IT'S THE F*****G SECOND AMENDMENT!

Almost every little kid likes to play with a toy gun at some point and wishes they had a real one to play with, but the problem here lies with the fact that some American children do! What needs to be done is for any American politician with half a brain and a third of a spine to gather his balls in a sac, realize that it's his own Constitution that needs adjusting and not the entertainment industry, and stand up to the sadistic, gun-toting jackasses who think the gun is and always should be a household appliance.

rosswilmot@attgloablnet.net

"What needs to be done is for any American politician with half a brain and a third of a spine to gather his balls in a sac, realize that it's his own Constitution that needs adjusting..."

Hardcore Dead?

I am writing you guys today to express my opinion on something dear to my heart. The hardcore gamer. The hardcore gamer, you see, is a dying breed. Ever since the little gray box called the PlayStation came out, things have changed. Gaming has become cool by pop culture standards and at first this was a good thing. But now I see the industry slipping away from the people who care most about it. Ever since I started reading your magazine eight years ago I wanted to someday

"...the solution is far simpler than that. It's the F***G SECOND AMENDMENT!"**

Now, I am not saying that Canada is the holy land when it comes to violence control, but it is quite rare to have a major news story break up here about a child killing another child with his/her parents' gun. Just because you all have a right to have a life-ending device in your homes does not mean that you should.

"I see the industry slipping away from the people who care most about it."

DESERT ISLAND GAMES

Five Games You Couldn't Do Without

If you were stuck on a desert island and could only have five games with you, which would they be? E-mail us your lists at EGM@zd.com. Mark the subject line 'Desert Island Games.'

Mario Party
Mario Party 2
Mario Kart 64
Bust-A-Groove
Puzzle Fighter
liu_krybaby@hotmail.com

Chrono Trigger
Castlevania SOTN
Monster Rancher 2
Silent Hill
Resident Evil 2
jaredpeck2@juno.com

Castlevania SOTN
Zelda: A Link to the Past
Zelda: Ocarina of Time
Metal Gear Solid
Gran Turismo 2
00hovjas@hughenden.btrd.ab.ca

Sonic CD
Asteroids
Pinball Fantasies
Lunar: Eternal Blue
Tetris Attack
demonseed2@worldnet.att.net

Madden 2000
Final Fantasy VII
Final Fantasy VIII
Gran Turismo 2
Driver
treynolds@bearnet.net

Yoshi's Island
Super Mario All-Stars
GoldenEye 007
Samurai Shodown 2
Samurai Shodown 4
marlon_adams_99@yahoo.com

Question of the Moment

Is Sony Going To Rule The Universe With PlayStation2?

PlayStation2 will probably rule the world unless Nintendo keeps putting out awesome multiplayer games like the Mario Party games.

the_Assassin85@hotmail.com

No, because my Dreamcast is still "thinking."

paul@mobiletel.com

The PlayStation2 will rule until the Dolphin comes out, then Nintendo will be the king again as it once was.

aspacecadet@aol.com

I'm voting Sony for the United States Presidency!

dmclight55@aol.com

Da rock says...what kind of roody poo question is that? It will layeth a smackdown on Nintendo and Sega.

smokeymon9954@aol.com

No. I don't think it will rule the video gaming world—but I think it will come damn near close to it.

eggbowl576@yahoo.com

With Sony already king of the electronics industry hill, the PlayStation2 is just another piece of their immortality.

therex50@hotmail.com

PlayStation2? Is that thing still around? Nintendo's DOLPHIN is what you people need to be lookin' for. It will ROCK!

tiger638@yahoo.com

A Fat Chance in Hell! At least not without online gaming. Plus Dreamcast will be ruling things by the time they see daylight.

dr_deepthought@hotmail.com

Sony has ruled, still rules, and shall continue to rule the universe when its awesome machine hits the States this fall. Goodbye N64 and so long Dreamcast.

djgonzo70@hotmail.com

Next Month's Question of the Moment:

What Do You Want In An Online Game?

Send your short but sweet responses to: EGM@zd.com with the subject heading: **Online**

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Tangy. Fruity. Chewy.

It's a kick in the mouth.

LETTERS

You can write EGM at:

EGM Letters
P.O. Box 3338
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338
e-mail: EGM@zd.com

Please note: We reserve the right to edit any correspondence for space purposes. If you don't want your name, city/state or e-mail address printed, tell us so (but please include your phone number and mailing address for Letter of the Month consideration).

work in the field of video games, but now I'm not sure I want to. In an industry that's driven by sequels, prequels, copies and unoriginality, I feel that none of my creative visions can be realized. When the PS first came out, there were all these genres I had never seen before: car combat, destruction derbys, survival horror, jumping rabbits, etc., etc., but as with all popular forms of entertainment, the formulas that made so many PS games popular are being repeated and overdone. Thankfully Sega has made a comeback and is starting to cater more to the hardcore. I just hope that the industry doesn't bury itself when gaming isn't cool anymore. If this happens who will they be turning to? All the people who kept this industry alive through the ups and downs.

Joseph Weller
resindue@aol.com

The hardcore element of the market is proportionately less now than it was...but it will always be present. Gaming is past the point where it's going to dwindle like it has in the past—it's here to stay now, so you should be pleased that you've seen something grow to such a huge industry. In many ways it's just like the movie business, and in years to come we'll look back and acknowledge that there was always a group who championed the cause. Sure, commercialization quashes some creativity—but there will always be gems like Zelda, Metal Gear Solid, Perfect Dark or even Chu Chu Rocket amid the Twisted Metals and the Test Drives.

Get In Line

Did you guys have anyone in Japan for the PS2 launch? I can only imagine how mad it must have been with all the people lining up waiting for PlayStation 2. How come it's never like that here?

Josh Grulier
Tampa, FL

Our boy Chris 'CJ' Johnston was out in Tokyo for the launch and valiantly stood in line for us. Check out how it went in this month's News section.

SHORTS

The very bottom of the *EGM* letters barrel.

To all video game producers and you guys at *EGM*. The world will not be right until there is a game made about pimpin'. Thank you, and may I say "Fear the Mullet," because its power comes from within.

lseguin@voyager.net

The mullet is apparently one of the fastest growing Internet fads.

Conker's BFD: If this IS real, I will buy it the day it comes out, and I will kick my own ass for thinking it was an April Fool.

woodhams23@aol.com

Make sure you send us a photo. We'd like to see that.

APRIL FOOL

April Fool! Did You Get It?

It took me a while to find. At first I thought it was that new Conker 64 game, but after looking at the issue thoroughly, I found something even more unbelievable: Perfect Dark soon to be released. That's the joke, right?

Eddie Yoo

It was pretty obvious that Conker's Bad Fur Day's mature themes bit was your April Fool's trick. After all the cutesy crap Rare's been showing us, it's just not believable. I just wonder how many people are going to think the Final Fantasy stuff was fake.

John Spinella

Just great!! It was awesome! I nearly pissed in my pants. I just got finished reading my April issue. When I saw that article about the Giga Intellivision I was awestruck. Then a few minutes later reality set in and I realized that it was the April issue. Sure enough, I went back to look and there was some "little known" company working on it called Lipra (also known as April 1).

Jason Massengale

Surely the "Sensation Heightening Interactive Technology" raised a few eyebrows too? C'mon...think about it. You'd be shocked at the number of e-mails we got where people really believed the Giga Intellivision story. It was the only joke...promise. Although Perfect Dark *was* delayed.

LETTER ART

WINNER

Chao Sen Chen
Brooklyn, NY

Congratulations, your prize is on the way—an ASCII Specialized Control Pad for the PlayStation. It features rapid-fire controls for all buttons and slow motion for those intense moments.

The ASCII Control Pad

Put your creative skills to the test by decking out a #10 envelope (the long business type) with your own unique touch. Send your letter art to:

EGM Letter Art
PO Box 3338
Oak Brook, IL
60522-3338

(All entries become the property of ZD Inc. and will not be returned!)

Close, but no controller

Bad luck to these guys...better luck next time. Feel free to e-mail us artwork as well. More of our messages are e-mails these days—so don't miss out!

Erica Patino, Cocoa, FL

Paul Maybury
via the Internet

David Ormsbee
Springfield, OR

•The Pressure

Spring 2000

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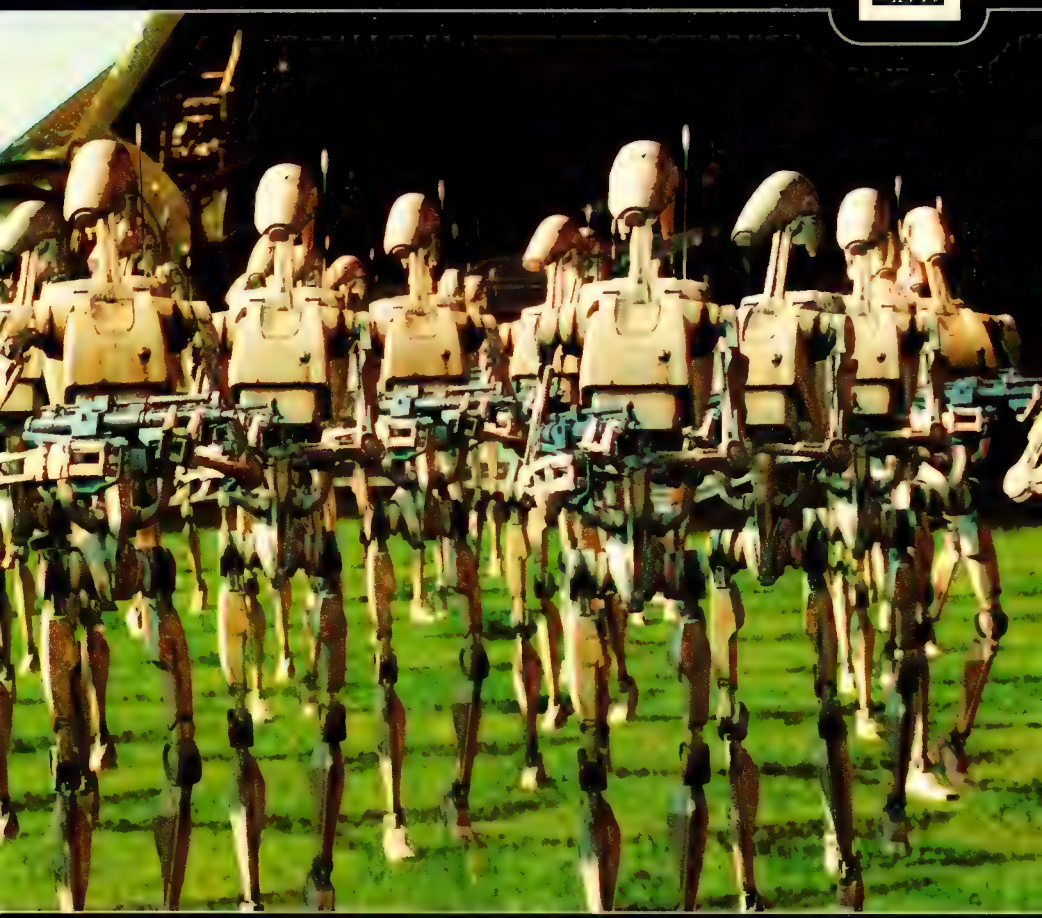

downfall, alien creatures and mysterious
But, wise Jedi, the choice is yours. Enter at your own risk.

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www.starwars.com

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omikron

The Nomad Soul

TEEN T

CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

quantic dream

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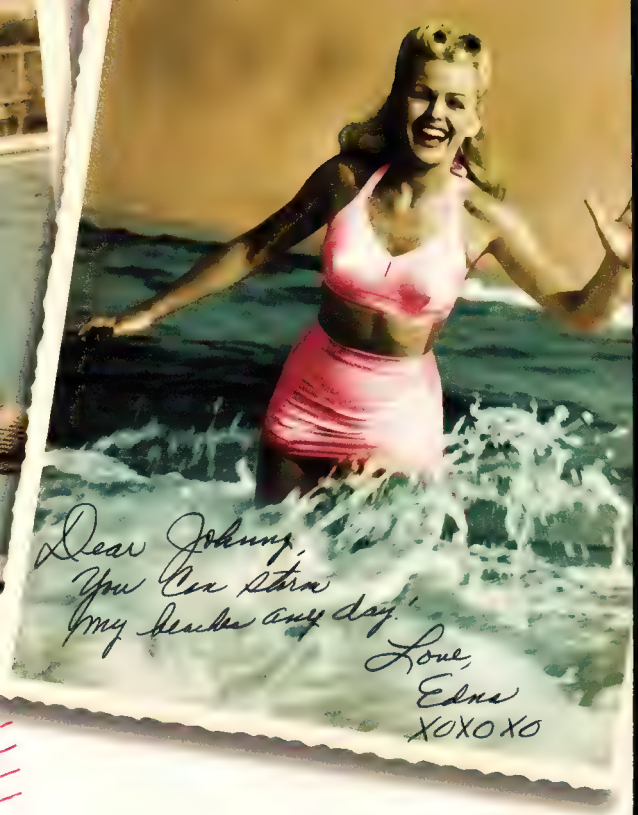

Edna? How'd you get this number? No! I can't talk right now...we're about to launch a major offensive!

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By Chris Johnston chris_johnston@zd.com

Press Start

The Hottest Gaming News on the Planet

Can I Play With Madness?

If you were in Japan and wanted a PS2 on launch day and hadn't pre-ordered one over Sony's online site or at your local games shop, you were doing one thing the day and night before—waiting in line. Sony's online site alone was so bogged down by demand that it had to be shut down shortly after opening on Feb. 15. Stores stopped taking pre-orders soon after (some had not begun taking them to begin with).

In the U.S. we're used to pre-ordering a system and waltzing into the shop on launch day with no waiting, no crowds. It's exciting but not at this level.

To give you an example, here's what we experienced while waiting for our first PS2: We ventured to the Yodobashi Camera game store in Shinjuku at 8:30 p.m. on March 3, as a sign indicated that a line would begin forming after they closed that day. Unfortunately for them, there were already about 100 people standing around in front of the shop. As more people showed up, the harder it was for store employees to keep the path to the store clear. The number of people in the street outside the shop quickly grew to 300-400 by the time 9 p.m. rolled around. Store employees told the crowd that they had enough PS2 systems for everyone and that they didn't have to worry, but no one budged. Then it was announced that a line was forming and that it had to be three people wide. A mad dash began for the front and side of the shop—a deluge of people pushing in as orderly a manner as could be expected to get into this line.

The resulting line wasn't three people across—it was more like eight. So the store staff efficiently filtered everyone around, working from the front of the line to the back, walking people halfway around the business district adjacent to the shop and near the Shinjuku train station. By this time it was 10 p.m. and we sat down to get ready for the long, cold wait until morning. As some stores stated they'd begin selling the system at 7 a.m. the next morning, we were hopeful that something similar would happen at Yodobashi Camera. Just after midnight the line began moving, and as we got up to the front, they told us how everything would work the next day. We were each given tickets to come back to buy our systems and games beginning at 5 a.m. After getting some much-needed sleep, we returned at 4:45 a.m. Already, the line stretched about to where we were the night before (which was still within the first half). Lucky for us the line moved quickly and we had finished purchasing the system, games and accessories by 7:30 a.m. But the line we were in had over 1,000 people in it the night before. Some hardcore game freaks, some just people wrapped up in the hype surrounding the event. It's absolutely unthinkable in the U.S. for a video game system launch to have so much activity around it. Can you imagine a line of more than 1,000 people in front of your local Babbage's or Electronics Boutique? Neither can we—but we'll see this fall.

EGM PS2 Launch Scrapbook

CONGRATS

One Sofmap store (an electronics chain that sells video games) in Akihabara had flowers hung outside. Upon closer inspection, they were from the presidents of companies like SNK, Capcom, Square and Namco congratulating Sony on the launch.

WE HAVE LIFT-OFF

PS2 All Over

The week prior to the system's launch PS2 was all over the news. The nightly news had views of Akihabara showing people camped outside shops three days before the official release date on March 4. Kid's shows had segments on the systems with the hosts checking out the launch games (mostly Ridge Racer V). The night before, news crews were all over the place—documenting the ensuing chaos all over Japan. PS2 was such big news that it got on the front page of at least one newspaper (shown above) and was a hot topic in others. Softbank, publisher of such weekly magazines in Japan as *Dreamcast Magazine* and *The PlayStation*, had its own PS2 magazine called PS2 E-Motion on newsstands. And the most respected Japanese magazine (at least by us U.S. journalists), *Weekly Famitsu*, had a special section in its latest issue highlighting all the launch games. When we ventured to Akihabara the day before launch, nothing but excitement was in the air. Demo units running PS2 software were posted outside all of the major game stores with crowds gathering to get a glimpse of what they'd be playing at home the next day. Trucks outside of stores delivering PS2 goodies arrived Friday morning, and surprisingly were not overturned by those already gathered. The police tried to disperse the crowds as shop owners pleaded for them to clear paths for regular customers—but that didn't work. The pictures on this page show some of the launch mania.

980,000

PS2 LAUNCH SALES

The number of PlayStation2 systems sold over launch weekend in Japan March 4-6.

IMPORT CALENDAR

Tekken Tag Tournament

Import Pick of the Month: Namco puts its über-fighter on PS2. Can they work the same magic on PS2 with Tekken that they did on the DC with Soul Calibur?

PlayStation

3/23	King of Fighters '99, SNK (Fighting)
4/13	Tiny Bullet, SCEI (Action)
4/20	Dancing Stage Featuring Dreams Come True, Konami (Misc.)
April	Devilman, Bandai (Action)
April	Ray Crisis, Taito (Action)
5/25	Metal Slug X
May	Dance Dance Revolution 3rd Mix, Konami (Misc.)

Dreamcast

3/30	Marvel Vs. Capcom 2, Capcom (Fighting)
3/30	King of Fighters '99 Evolution, SNK (Fighting)
4/27	Dance Dance Revolution 2nd Mix Club Version, Konami (Misc.)
4/27	Samba De Amigo, Sega (Misc.)
April	Powerstone 2, Capcom (Fighting)

PlayStation2

3/30	Dead or Alive 2, Tecmo (Fighting)
3/30	Tekken Tag Tournament, Namco (Fighting)
4/13	Gradius III & IV, Konami (Shooter)
April	Sky Surfer, Idea Factory (Sports)
April	Evergrace, From Software (RPG)

Nintendo 64

3/24	Kirby's Dreamland 64, Nintendo (Action)
4/27	Legend of Zelda: Mask of Mujula, Nintendo (RPG)

Nintendo 64DD

April	F-Zero X Expansion Kit, Nintendo (Misc.)

*Schedule subject to change without notice. Consult your local import game store for the latest release information.

Perfect Explanation for Perfect Dark

In a disappointing—although not surprising—move, Nintendo and Rare announced a few days after our last issue went to press that they are delaying the release of Perfect Dark for another month and a half. The game's new release date is May 22 (it was supposed to hit April 10).

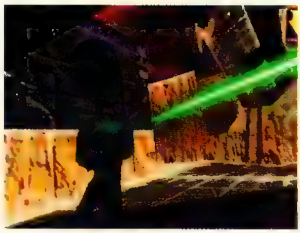
Rare, who's both developing and publishing Perfect Dark, is delaying the game to "iron out all the finishing touches," according to one Nintendo spokesperson. We're hoping Rare will use the extra dev time to fix the often sluggish frame-rates we saw in a recent preview build of the game.

In other Perfect Dark news, Nintendo and Rare seemed at odds over the reasons behind the removal of the game's "Perfect Head" face-mapping feature, which lets you paste your face onto your in-game character using the Game Boy Camera and N64 Transfer Pak. Last month, Nintendo's Ken Lobb told us the feature was removed for technical reasons. "Rare could never get the feature to work without crashing," he said. "It's something they tried very hard to fix. They didn't know how long it would take to fix. They couldn't give us a time."

Rare, however, gave a different story on its Web site, www.rareware.com, where they said, "The game, developed over the last two-and-a-half years, has evolved into such an outstanding product that in order to avoid any controversy during the game's release, as of Feb. 3, 2000, the fully operational Game Boy Camera feature within Perfect Dark has been removed from the software." Rare went on to say, in a response to a reader's letter, "The majority of people involved became convinced as time went by that this feature, however revolutionary, carried the potential to become such a negative factor with a view to mainstream publicity that we felt it would be unfair to jeopardize the standing of an entire game—and a massively anticipated game at that—in order to preserve one single element. Under the circumstances, the only safe option was to completely remove the face-mapping facility from the game and hope the fans understood." Rare went on to explain the camera feature will not be available via codes, passwords or any other sneaky means in shipped versions of the game.

When contacted about Nintendo's earlier, differing reasoning for the removal of the Perfect Head feature, a spokesperson for the Big N told us simply that Rare's explanation is accurate.

www.rareware.com



Nintendo Says No Dolphin Until 2001

In mid-January we were told that news on Dolphin was mere weeks away. On the eve of the Game Developer's Conference opening day the news broke: No Dolphin in North America and Europe until the first half of 2001.

On top of that, Nintendo seems to be distancing itself from the notion of building a do-everything, set-top box, multimedia home server (phew that's a lotta words) as Sony and Microsoft are doing. "We're building a machine with only one purpose—to play video games," Nintendo of America president Minoru Arakawa said. "This is what Nintendo has always known best, and what consumers have always wanted most. Project Dolphin's eventual success will come from the combination of Nintendo's dedicated, world-class game designers and our beloved franchise characters—the proven recipe for the world's best interactive fun."

The announcement makes no mention of any probable U.S. release of the company's next-gen portable, Game Boy Advance, which is scheduled to hit Japan sometime this fall.

Peter Main, Nintendo's executive vice president of sales and marketing tried to soften the blow of this news, which will undoubtedly make it harder for gamers to resist the beckoning calls of the other next-generation home machines that'll be on the market this year. Main said there are two benefits to the delay. "First, it allows the millions of current Nintendo 64 owners to devote their video game dollars to the best lineup of new games in our history—without having to buy a new system. Second, the new launch date for Dolphin means that our system will come to market next year with a portfolio of game names across all genres that simply can't be matched by any other company." With Miyamoto, Rare, Pokémon, and Metroid (hint, hint), we'll wait.

CAMERA 1, CAMERA 2

You may have seen the U.S. edition of *Newsweek* with its March 6, 2000 PlayStation2 cover. But you may not know that the Japanese edition of *Newsweek* had the same cover (and same cover story) that same week. Here are the two covers...can you spot the differences?

More on Final Fantasy The Movie

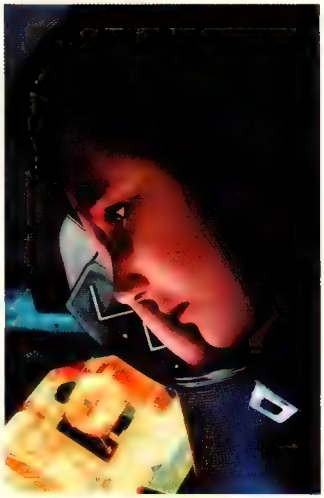
It's not much, but a few more details on *Final Fantasy The Movie* were released in early March to coincide with ShoWest, a film industry convention in Las Vegas. Short trailers have been posted to the film's Web site at www.finalfantasy.com which will be updated with more footage weekly and monthly, respectively. Here's the summary of the film's back story released by Square:

"Set on Earth in the year 2065, destruction and confusion surround us. Cities are deserted, the population is decimated, and the precious few humans who remain must find a way to survive.

"In this world, we face death as we part with our loved ones. We begin to question what 'life' and 'love' is, and what is the philosophical definition of the 'heart.' After all, in this world, science has analyzed life and death, expressing life as a form of energy.

"Beyond the riveting battle scenes, Final Fantasy will take you on a journey of personal discovery into both the real and fantasy worlds, drawing you deep into its characterizations and themes: love, friendship, dreams, adventure, life and death."

The movie opens summer 2001.



First Look at Dreamcast Digital Camera

In another attempt to position the Dreamcast as a fun, family-friendly part of your home entertainment center, Sega will release an Internet-ready DC digital camera, called Dreameye in Japan this June. The camera will initially be used for video mail, photo mail and TV phone functionality, not games. It will come packed with Visual Park, software developed by Sega and CRI. Using the software's video-mail feature, users can send 25-seconds-or-less movies to friends, which can be stored on a VMU.

Dreameye can also be used to take pictures to send via the Net using editing software created by Sega and PictureIQ called Dream Photo Fun. With it you can take and edit photos to your specifications and send them to friends and family via e-mail. There are plans to let users use pictures they've taken in games, but specifics haven't been determined yet. Thirty-one pics can be saved onto the camera's internal flash memory with the camera with a resolution of 640x480 pixels.

Finally, the camera can be used as a TV phone. This was demonstrated at a press conference where Sega president Shoichirou Irimajiri addressed the crowd in Japan from the Milia trade show in France. To use the TV phone, you'll set the Dreameye on top of your TV and speak through a headset. Plans are to allow users to place calls via the Internet or phone. A price for the Dreameye (and whether it will be released in the U.S.) has not been determined yet.

Sega's Dreameye digital camera (left), the TV phone headset (middle) and PictureIQ's Dream Photo Fun (right) lets DC owners take pictures, short movies, or use a video phone.

Square Teams with Disney

Tetsuya Nomura, best known for his work on Final Fantasy VII and VIII is set to be the lead guy on a new joint venture between Squaresoft and Disney. Announced during the PlayStation Festival in early May, the team-up of the two entertainment giants will see a new game emerge sometime in 2001. Nomura takes the reigns as producer for the first time (he's previously been a director and an artistic director) and this has raised questions among game fans around the world. In all of Nomura's past games, a major character has died as part of the plot. Will we see the first major character death in a Disney franchise product since Bambi's mom bought it? OK, maybe not.

No details are available as to what the game will be about as we go to press, although the collected management of both Square and Disney showed a rather unimpressive CG demo of Goofy that underwhelmed Japanese and Western correspondents alike. A Japanese journalist sitting in front of the *EGM* contingent even fell asleep during the conference, much to our amusement.

JAPAN TOP 10

1	Sega GT Homologation Special Sega	
2	Mobile Suit Gundam: Giren's Ambition Bandai	
3	Gallop Racer 2000 Tecmo	
4	Pocket Monsters Gold/Silver Nintendo	
5	Vagrant Story Square	
6	Bio Hazard CODE: Veronica Capcom	
7	Donkey Kong GB: Dinky & Dixie Nintendo	
8	Ajito 3 Banpresto	
9	Bio Hazard Gun Survivor Capcom	
10	Dance Dance Revolution 2nd Mix SCE!	

Weekly Famitsu, week ending 2/20/2000

"The entry of Microsoft into game-machine making is a sign that the electronic-games industry has come of age."

- Wall Street Journal, March 10, 2000

X-BOX is real...and it's more powerful than PlayStation2

After months of speculation, Microsoft finally unveiled its plans for a consumer video games machine at the Games Development Conference (GDC) on March 10. Addressing the armies of developers and journalists, Bill Gates outlined the company's plans while also unveiling unprecedented support for the machine which is set to be in stores by fall 2001.

At its heart the machine is very similar to a powerful home PC, however the architecture has a lot in common with machines like the PS2. This is not a PC stuffed into a console-like box. It is a closed architecture machine which is designed to enjoy the same lifespan as a typical console. Microsoft believes it is introducing an entertainment box, designed for a single purpose (playing games) that will be sufficiently future-proof to last four or five years.

So what can it do? Judging from the projected specs of the machine, it is expected that the system's graphics power is significantly greater than PlayStation2. Microsoft representatives assert that it will be "32 times as powerful" as Sony's machine, but under closer scrutiny it would seem that saying twice or three times as powerful is justifiable. "The graphics chip is three generations beyond any existing PC technology," Bill Gates stated in his address at GDC. The custom nVidia graphics chip is much more powerful than any graphics processor or accelerator currently available for the PC and is rated at 300 million micro-polygons per second [a micro polygon is a pixel that can be manipulated as a polygon]. This translates into approximately 150 million polygons per second. PS2 is capable of 60 million polygons a second. It is also believed that the graphics processor will be much more efficient than Sony's machine at processing textures, lighting and other effects, meaning that it can sustain larger poly models with all of the good stuff switched on.

Much of the strategy behind the system has been based on input from both software developers and from consumers. Microsoft wanted to produce a machine that would make life as easy as possible for the people who make games, while providing everything that people who play them want to see. The system architecture reflects this...for example, the machine's memory is designed so that all aspects of the hardware can share it. This means that the X-Box will be able to process all code as quickly and as efficiently as possible...much more so in fact than an equivalently spec'd PC.

The system won't be shipped with a modem, but a modem will be available at launch. The DVD drive will be able to play movies. The Ethernet port means that broad-bandwidth Internet connections will be possible out of the box. The 8Gb hard drive will allow games to run much faster than on most consoles as it can be used as a giant "swap disk" for sound files or graphics files. How will this benefit you? In-game commentaries can be much more varied, or the graphics used in the level of a game can be even more diverse. You'll also be able to download new stats and features from the Internet and store them on the drive like it's a giant internal memory card. "The Internet generation of games requires a hard disk. Simply relying on the RAM isn't sufficient," Gates stated in his announcement. "You'll be able to download updates to games, add-ons, new stats and you'll also be able to download demo versions of games from the Internet," he continued.

Microsoft is at great pains to establish X-Box as a console. It is not a PC in a smaller box. X-Box games will be sold separately from PC games, and you won't be able to run one on the other. Because of the similarity in system architecture, it will be very easy for companies to port PC games (many developers and publishers are on board including Konami, Midway, Sierra, Take 2 and Reflections – so you can draw some conclusions about possible game releases), but Microsoft is actively encouraging "console-style games" for the system. Age of Empires, they say, isn't a suitable game – but they do want to see action games, RPGs and all the good stuff that we're used to seeing on existing systems.

600MHz CPU
New graphics chip by nVidia
DVD (which will play movies)
64Mb unified RAM
8Gb Hard Drive
Ethernet
3D sound processor
Four controller ports
No Region Lock-out

OUT: Fall 2000

The "Dancing Robot" demo is all generated in real time and features this girl...

...and this giant robot dancing in unison in a huge hangar environment. It's VERY cool.

	GRAPHICS	JOYPADS	DVD	STORAGE	COMMS
X-BOX	150m polys/sec	4	Yes	8Gb HD	Ethernet/USB
PS2	60m polys/sec	2	Yes	8Mb card	USB/Firewire
Dreamcast	12m polys/sec	4	No	128k VMU	56k modem/Exp Bus

Lara, Interrupted

Angelina Jolie to play Lara Croft?

After months of speculation as to who will play the world's most famous video game girl in the upcoming Paramount movie, it seems that the choice has finally been made. Although not officially confirmed as we go to press, a story in *Daily Variety* revealed that Angelina Jolie was in final negotiations for the project.

Jolie, whose previous movies include *Hackers; Pushing Tin; The Bone Collector; Girl, Interrupted;* and *Dancing in the Dark*, was not a name that had come up until recently. Speculation and rumor had run rife for months that British beauty Elizabeth Hurley, Catherine Zeta Jones and even Demi Moore were in negotiations for the part. Now that things seem final, we're sure you'll agree that Angelina Jolie certainly looks more than capable of being a convincing Lara.

As for details on the film itself, it seems that hi-octane action supremo Simon West is set to bring some of his *Con Air* smarts to the project when he takes the helm (taking over from previous top dog Stephen Herek.) *Face/Off* scribes Michael Werb and Michael Colleary are currently working on a new script for the project and principal photography is expected to begin this summer.

As for the story, we hear that some liberties have been taken with Lara's history as it now seems she's being pitched as a publishing executive who is also somehow an archaeologist on the side. This may be a new interpretation of the backstory to the original Tomb Raider, that revealed she helped fund her trips by selling her journals.

Expect to see *Tomb Raider* the movie in theaters by Christmas 2000 at the earliest, with the summer of 2001 as a more realistic possibility.

For updates over the next few months, check out the News sections on *www.videogames.com* for more info.

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NEED FOR SPEED
PORSCHE

Flight 911

For your safety

In preparation for takeoff, securely fasten your racing harness. You are flying in the Porsche® 911® turbo—capable of launching from 0 to 60 in 4.3 seconds and cruising at speeds in excess of 170 mph. Please remember, smoking the tires through 360s and four-wheel drifts is strictly encouraged. We know you have a choice when it comes to your adrenaline needs—thank you for choosing Need for Speed.

Sicherheitshinweise

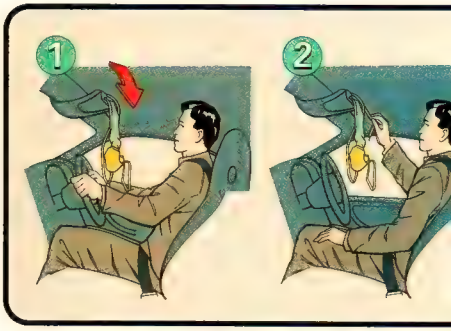
Vor dem Start die Sicherheitsgurte fest anlegen. Du fliegst im Porsche 911 Turbo.

Mesures De Sécurité

Veillez à bien attacher vos ceintures en vue du démarrage imminent. Vous vous trouvez à bord de la Porsche 911 turbo.

安全のために

離陸時には、必ずシートベルトをしっかりと締めてください。
現在、ポルシェ911 ターボで飛行中です。



RP

also available on PC CD

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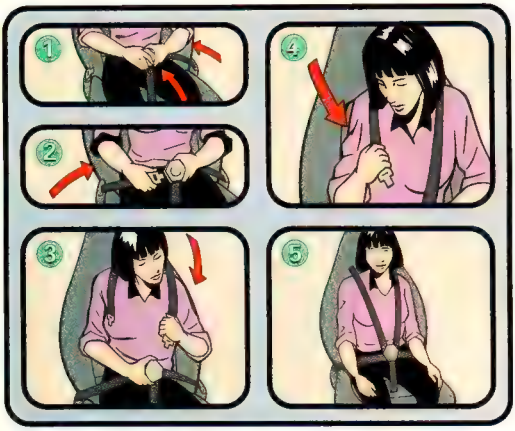
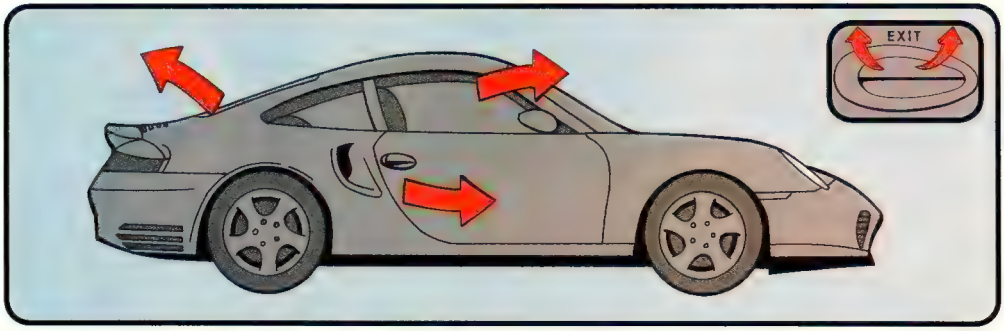




EXIT OPERATION:
OBSERVE SURROUNDINGS. IF SCENERY IS MOVING–REMAIN IN VEHICLE. IF STATIONARY, PROCEED WITH CAUTION TO NEAREST EXIT.

In-depth with PlayStation2

It was like Christmas in March when we finally got through the lines and had PS2 systems in hand. All of the system's final features were shown off and confirmed just two weeks before at the PlayStation Festival. We knew it was going to be impressive, but once you get one in your hands you can try it out at your own pace. And when any system launches and is finally in your hands it's exciting—be it Dreamcast, N64 or any other previous system launch. The next four pages will show you exactly what it's like to open up the box for the first time and check out some of its finer points.

Like the Dreamcast box and its use of orange, the PS2 comes in a deep blue box. No pictures except for a lineup of compatible accessories on the back. Anyone unfamiliar with gaming might think it's the latest laptop or computer—it's not instantly recognizable as a video game system. The PS2 comes with the system, a Dual Shock 2 analog controller, power cord, A/V cable, utility disc, memory card and the usual instructions sheet and warranty information. The utility disc is basically an online instruction manual telling you how to use the browser, DVD player and other functions. There's a short DVD demo on the disc with undersea life footage (crystal-clear quality, too). You can use almost all of the licensed PS1 controllers and peripherals on PS2, including the A/V and S-Video cables. Really high-end users can get a PS2 Component Video Out cable. In fact, Ridge Racer V has JogCon and NeGcon compatibility. You can't save PS2 games onto a PS1 memory card and you'll need a PS2 multi-tap for PS2 games that require the Dual Shock 2. Speaking of the DS2, it doesn't feel any different than the Dual Shocks you're used to. Except that every button is analog (except Select and Start), and that feature works on both Ridge Racer V and the demo we had handy of Gran Turismo 2000.

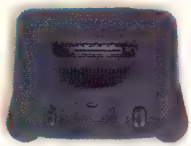
When you first boot up the PS2, the boot-up screen is a vast universe with a few lights swirling around. As you continue to use it, there are more things added—like cubes—evolving as you use the system. You can select a variety of display options, including an option enhanced for 16x9 (theater-wide or widescreen) television sets. Most importantly, you can set the menus to English instead of Japanese.

The system can be set up a variety of ways. Here at the office we've had it flat without the horizontal stand, vertical without the vertical stand, or both ways with the appropriate stands (unfortunately stands were in short supply during the launch weekend). Yes, it's easy to insert the discs when the system's on its side.

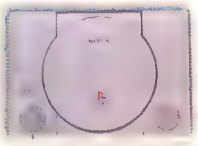
Launched with the system were Ridge Racer V, Street Fighter EX3, Eternal Ring, Stepping Selection, Drum Mania (with controller), Kessen, A-Train 6, two Shogi games and a Mahjong title. With more to come, of course!

Weighing the competition

PlayStation2 is one of the heaviest game consoles in recent years. But it isn't much wider or taller than any of the consoles you probably have in your collection already. The pictures below are to scale with each other.



2.3 lbs

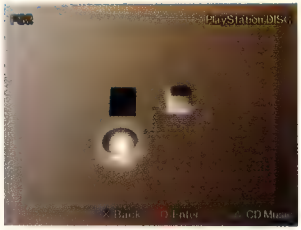


2.8 lbs

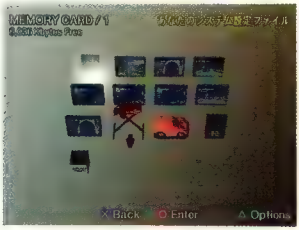
5.2 lbs

3.2 lbs

The boot-up screen evolves...those cubes aren't there the first time you boot it up.



The PS2's Browser automatically detects devices plugged into the machine.



Saves on the PS2 memory card–including the DVD player and system settings.

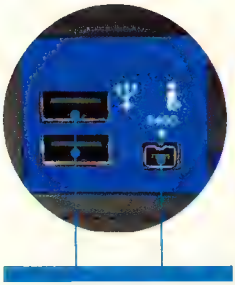
The save for Ridge Racer V animates if you threaten to delete it.

Put in a regular PlayStation memory card and here's what you'll see.

Its settings menu lets you customize the system, including making the menus English.

Play DVDs & CDs

Perhaps the most attractive feature of the PS2 is the ability to play DVD movies in addition to games and audio CDs on one machine. The Japanese PS2 only plays Region 2 DVD movies (Japan and some of Europe)—it will not play those encoded for Region 1 (the U.S.). The DVD player software is preinstalled on the memory card that comes with the system. However, if it is accidentally erased, you can reinstall it using the handy PS2 Utility Disk. For features, it's got everything you need to get the most from DVD, including angle switching, Dolby Digital and DTS sound, fast forwarding, chapter skip, multiple languages and more. The system's CD player is a bit disappointing. A no-frills player that isn't even as feature-filled as the PS1 (no way to set up repeating tracks or switch to see the time remaining). Hopefully this can be updated, too.



Portless Ports

Just for fun we tried hooking up various devices to the PS2's USB and Firewire ports. We tried a Zip drive to the USB ports and it did not show up in the Browser. Then we attempted to hook up a firewire digital-grabbing interface to it to see if we could get video out using firewire...nothing. We could not seem to get the system's optical out port (for digital sound such as Dolby Digital) to work on either games or movies.

Put a U.S. PlayStation game in the Japanese PS2 and what happens? Nothing. You get this screen which tells you to wake up and remind yourself that systems like this have region lockout (damn!). Will there be a mod? This system is locked up real tight. But someone's probably already hard at work trying to figure it out.

Enhanced PS1 Games

Sony said at first that the PS2 would not enhance PS1 games, but they've flip-flopped and now the PS2 does make some slight enhancements.

One is that games can now be accessed using the PS2's faster drive speed. That will cut down (but not eliminate) the time it takes to load up some games. Some games use it, others don't.

Second, it smooths out textures in the games. It does not enhance the graphics so much that they look as good as bleem's enhancements. You'll have to try out your own games to see if they're enhanced or not. But even though it is only making slight enhancements, some games don't seem to like that and have glitches. Dino Crisis, for example, has missing/wrong textures in spots.

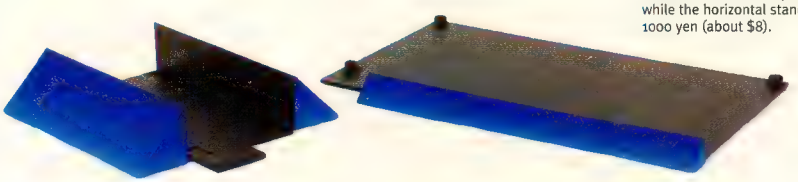
Two examples of this smoothing are shown here. Above is SCEI's UmJammer Lammy. Notice how smooth the "Milk Can" logo and the other textures look. Below is Square's Vagrant Story, another title you can really tell a difference with.

There are a few PS1 games that have spotty

compatibility with the PS2. SCEI released a list of about a dozen games (out of a library of over 2,000) that don't work or don't work particularly well with the machine. That list contained mostly Japanese titles that were never released in the U.S. (and frankly, weren't ones likely to be imported by U.S. gamers) like Monster Farm and Gradius Deluxe Pack. As the U.S. PS2 nears launch, SCEA will likely release a similar list.

Stand and deliver

The system doesn't come with a stand—you have to buy that separately. The vertical stand will run you 1500 yen ($13) while the horizontal stand will cost you 1000 yen (about $8).



First Impressions of a few of the PS2's launch games

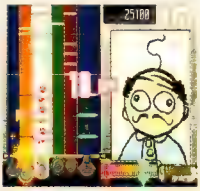
Ridge Racer V

This is easily the best of the PS2 launch games. Namco has created a game which really shows off what the hardware is capable of. From backgrounds with birds flying above, cars driving on the streets next to the tracks, lighted dashboards on the cars and brakes that glow when they get hot—this game is the most detailed driving game yet (until GT2000, that is). There's not even a hint of slowdown or pop-up anywhere to be found.

Those used to the feel of Gran Turismo might find it difficult to get back into the true feel of Ridge Racer (powerslides are an integral part of this game, remember). One really cool touch is the Pac-Man which goes across the screen at split times. If you're in first at a split time, he's being chased by all the ghosts. Visually the most stunning PS2 game at launch.

This is a PS2 game? Certainly seems like it could've used some more time in development. It doesn't look very good. Just about any Dreamcast fighter blows this away visually. It's not much improved from previous Street Fighter EX games, which looked good even though they ran on PS1 hardware. Backgrounds look disjointed and aren't as smooth or realistic-looking as most 3D fighters. Some of the effects, like reflections on the ground and uneven terrain are cool, but they don't make up for the lack of good character animation. The two most anticipated launch games were this and Ridge Racer, but after seeing this in action it's clear that this one's not as impressive as we thought. The premise of adding characters to your team as you beat them is cool though.

Street Fighter EX3



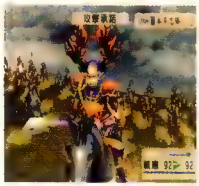
Drum Mania

Konami's Drum Mania is the latest game in its Bemani series to get a home version. This time, the game comes with the necessary controller (and it's big). You use the special drum controller to hit the pads as bars falling from the top reach the bottom of the screen. Above and beyond the arcade version of the game, this includes a training and edit mode where you can create your very own beats to go along with the songs.

Does it stretch the PS2 hardware? No. Is it fun? Yes. The drum noise isn't nearly as loud as it should be (you can hear the drum sticks hitting the controller more than you can hear the drum sounds they make in the game), and the graphics aren't going to drop any jaws. But it's one of those cool Japanese games that is addictive enough to hook music fans.

Kessen is one of the first PS2 titles on DVD-ROM. Watching the intro sequences, it's super difficult to tell what's real-time and what's full-motion video—everything's so clean. The game is really cinematic and detailed. When you first begin the game, there's an in-depth tutorial to teach you how to play—setting up troops, picking formations, moving them into formation for battle. At its heart, Kessen is much like other feudal-era war sims that Koei has done in the past, only a hundred times better-looking. After picking your battle plans, you watch everything unfold in superb-looking 3D (but you don't actually control that part). The game's music is also really cinematic and fits the setting perfectly. Needless to say, if it was in English we'd be enjoying Kessen a lot more.

Kessen



Carry-all carry case

What's cool about the PS2's Amaray-style DVD cases is that there's a little spot to hold a memory card too. So now if you use a particular memory card a lot with one game, you can store it in the same box.

Q-Mann

"You can communicate to a new cybercity. This will be the ideal home server. Did you see the movie *The Matrix*? Same interface. Same concept. Starting from next year, you can jack into *The Matrix*!"

Ken Kutaragi, proud papa of the PlayStation, extolling the virtues of the PlayStation2 as a home server to Newsweek.

Quartermann - Video Game Gossip & Speculation

Just a quick hit of gossip this month I'm afraid. Wait for next month when we'll bring you lots of juicy PS2 goodies from the PlayStation Festival in Japan. In the meantime...feast your eyes on these:

Rumor Metal Gear Solid 2 for PS2 could well be unveiled this year at E3 (in May) and details are starting to leak about story line and setting.
Truth Hideo Kojima was recently quoted in the *Official U.K. PlayStation Magazine* saying that the intro sequence for the VR Missions was created using "a certain piece of new hardware" which we now know to be PS2. Also, there has been word from the Konami offices that the new game is set in the U.S. (most likely NYC or L.A.) and that the story takes place a number of years after Snake retires at the end of MGS. We understand that Meryl will be back (in stealth garb as seen in *The Art of Metal Gear* book) and that Kojima's much-publicized "secret" meetings with the Wachowski brothers (of *The Matrix* fame) were concerned with the production values of the new game. We'll bring you more news soon.

Rumor Acclaim is working on a wide range of PS2 titles in time for the U.S. launch.
Truth It's no secret that Acclaim is enamored with the new machine (and rightly so) but details are emerging about specific titles. There are rumors of a surfing game in the works, but the worst-kept secret at Acclaim is Ferrari 360 Challenge.

Rumor The monthly Time Crisis update indicates yet another name change.
Truth First it was Time Crisis Alpha, then simply Time Crisis 3 and now we hear that it's to be called Time Crisis Project Titan. Who knows?

Rumor Despite more "real" details emerging, there have been some interesting X-Box rumors doing the rounds. For example: Numerous online reports hinted that the Dreamcast was the basis for the X-Box and that Microsoft would be bringing out an enhanced DC with a DVD drive.
Truth There may have been some confusion here as there have been numerous stories in Japan about how Microsoft is still eager to get a foothold in the country. A report in *Edge* magazine in the U.K. recently discussed the possibility of a Japanese government-sanctioned "set-top box" based on Dreamcast technology that would become the nation's "standard" for Web access and e-mail. The licensed box was said to be Dreamcast-based with additional features including DVD, USB ports, remote keyboard, webcam. zip drive and cable modem. Apparently a number of other companies are interested in licensing this technology and releasing what amount to non-Sega-branded Dreamcasts. Maybe Microsoft is getting involved with this?

Rumor We told you ages ago that Metal Gear would be coming to Dreamcast and the PC...well now that deal has shifted to X-Box. Metal Gear Solid 2 will be on both PS2 and X-Box when it launches next year.
Truth Our spies at the Game Developers Conference were cagey about any confirmed projects on X-Box, but the deal signed between Konami and Microsoft last year seems to have been based on X-Box technology ahead of anything else. **-The Q**

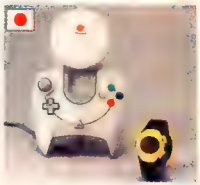
Tidbits

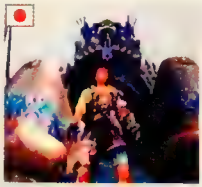
Nintendo Harry Potter?

Think you'd be good enough to nab the Snitch in Quidditch? You may be able to try soon enough. Word has it that Nintendo may have secured the license to make a game based on the popular Harry Potter series of books by J.K. Rowling. As for what system it'll be on, current speculation is Dolphin (yes!). The release of the game will undoubtedly coincide with the release of the live-action Harry Potter movie sometime in 2001.

Another bad creation—Sega and Swatch have teamed up to offer a watch that communicates with the Dreamcast and will be used other places too. Stick the watch up to this big "dish" adapter and it exchanges data (what data, Sega hasn't said). "I would be very disappointed if we don't sell 1 million watches in a short term," said Swatch president Nick Hayek. Available this spring in Japan for $130-180.

Game and...Watch?



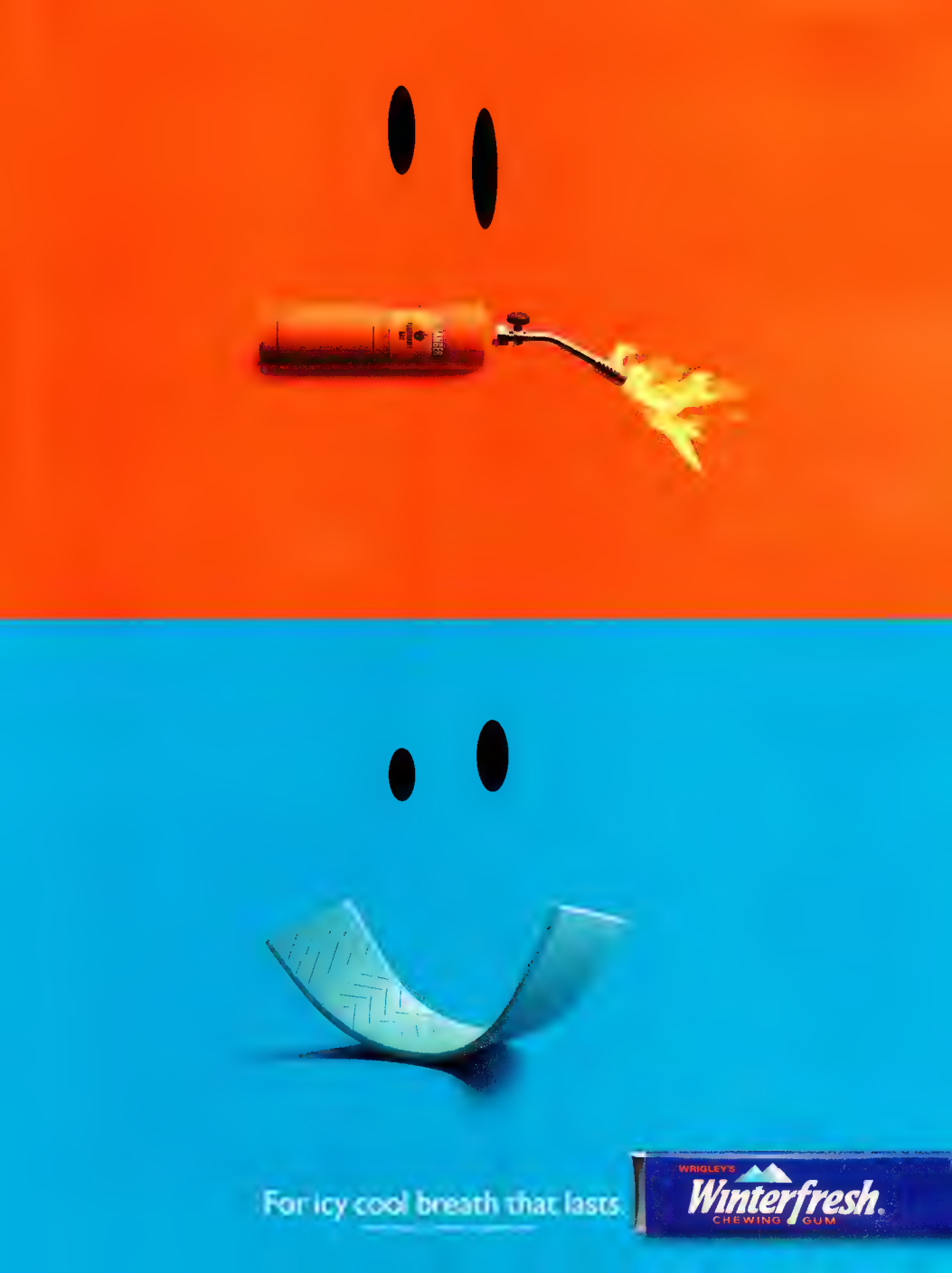


Final Fantasy Update

Square has announced a more specific release date, replacing the previous date of "summer" for Final Fantasy IX in Japan. It's now scheduled for a July release. Final Fantasy X is still on track for a spring 2001 release, while Final Fantasy XI has been bumped to a fall 2001 release. Still no word on when FFIX might be released in the U.S. One can hope the rumors of a fall/holiday 2000 release are correct. We'll see!

The U.S. hasn't gotten to experience the joys of Samba De Amigo yet (maybe some day), but Sega will release the game on Dreamcast in Japan April 27. It's a music game where you shake maracas to the beat of the music at three different heights—hi, mid and low. To get the full effect, gamers will have to pick up the special maraca controllers which will run ya about $74 (that's in addition to the $55 game). Livin' La Vida Loca!

Samba At Home


For icy cool breath that lasts.
WRIGLEY'S
Winterfresh
CHEWING GUM

The Top 20 Best-Selling Games of January, 2000

1 - Pokémon Yellow

At this point, who *doesn't* own a copy of **Nintendo's** Pokémon? Everybody from 10-year-old girls to burly-looking leather-clad bikers are playing a Pokémon of some sort. Looks like the fever isn't going to end anytime soon.

LAST MONTH	2
8.0 Chris	6.0 Crispin
8.0 Che	6.0 Shoe

2 - Gran Turismo 2

Casual racing fans and hardcore auto enthusiasts alike are finding **Sony's** Gran Turismo 2 too darned good to put down. Imagine what the craze is going to be like when GT2000 comes along for the anxiously awaited PlayStation2.

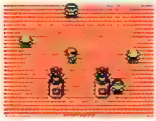
LAST MONTH	4
10 John	10 Crispin
10 Dean	10 Che

3 - Tony Hawk's Pro Skater

Activision's Tony Hawk's Pro Skater is quickly grinding its way up the charts. And it's no wonder, considering how incredible this game is. Take a look at our THPS2 cover feature in this issue for detailed info on the sequel.

LAST MONTH	7
9.0 Che	9.0 Crispin
8.0 Dean	7.5 Chris

4 - Pokémon Blue



Nintendo's Pokémon Blue has no reason to be sad, since it's still on the chart like many of its Pokémon brethren have been at one point or another. Strange how this little game is outselling Rare's big, bad Donkey Kong 64.

LAST MONTH	5
9.0 John R	8.0 Crispin
8.0 John D	9.0 Sushi

5 - Donkey Kong 64

Nintendo's Donkey Kong 64 is still selling fairly well, even though it dropped a few places from last month. No doubt, Rare's Perfect Dark, Conker's BFD and Banjo sequel will do even better than this DK 64-Bit revival.

LAST MONTH	1
8.5 Chris	8.5 Crispin
8.5 John D	8.0 Shawn

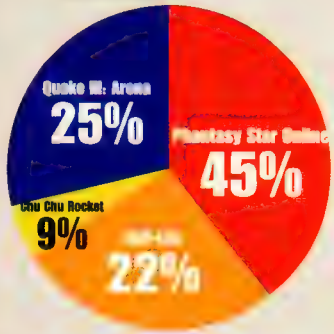
		LAST MONTH
6	Pokémon Red Nintendo	3
7	Spyro The Dragon SCEA	11
8	Gran Turismo SCEA	12
9	Pokémon Pinball Nintendo	8
10	Crash Bandicoot WARPED SCEA	20
11	Medal of Honor Electronic Arts	NEW
12	Tomorrow Never Dies Electronic Arts	6
13	Namco Museum 64 Namco	NEW
14	Super Smash Bros. Nintendo	---
15	Frogger Hasbro Interactive	15
16	NBA Live 2000 Electronic Arts	10
17	Metal Gear Solid Konami	---
18	Dukes of Hazzard Southpeak Interactive	NEW
19	Rugrats THQ	---
20	Driver GT Interactive	---

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games Service. Call Mary Ann Porreca at (516) 625 2345 for questions regarding this list. Top 5 game descriptions written by the *EGM* staff

VIDEOGAMES.COM POLL

More! More! More! More!

Which of these online DC games are you most anticipating to play on the Dreamcast Network?



Source: Videogames.com main poll results for 11/9/99

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Compiled By Chris Johnston chris_johnston@zd.com
& Jennifer Whitesides

Coming Soon - May 2000

April

Game Boy Color

Armada Secret Weapon - Metro 3D	Action
Battle Tanx - 3DO	Action
Blaster Master Enemy Below - Sunsoft	Action
Croc - THQ	Action
Driver - GT Software	Racing
Futsal Soccer Madness - Sunsoft	Sports
Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000 - Acclaim	Racing
Moomin's Tale - Sunsoft	Adventure
Pokémon Trading Card Game - Nintendo	Misc.
Rainbow Six - Redstorm	Action
Supershot Golf Robot - Crave Entertainment	Sports
Thrasher Skate & Destroy - Rockstar	Sports
Tomb Raider - Eidos	Action
Toobin - Midway	Action
Triple Play 2001 - THQ	Sports
Warlocked - Nintendo	Action
WCW Mayhem - Electronic Arts	Sports

PlayStation

Armorines in Project Swarm - Acclaim	Action
Caesar's Palace 2000 - Interplay	Misc.
Darkstone - Take 2 Interactive	RPG
Digimon World - Bandai	Action
Indiana Jones & Infernal Machine - LucasArts	Action
JoJo's Bizarre Adventure - Tommo	Adventure
Konami Rally - Konami	Racing
Koudelka - SNK	RPG
LEGO Rock Raiders - LEGO Media	Action
Micro Maniacs - Codemasters	Racing
Misadventures of Tron Bonne - Capcom	Adventure
Nickelodeon's Cat Dog - Hasbro Interactive	Action
Nightmare Creatures 2 - Konami	Action
Runabout 2 - Hot B	Racing
Samurai Shodown Warrior Rage - SNK	Action
Shao Lin - THQ	Fighting
Speed Punks - SCEA	Racing
Star Wars: Episode I Jedi Power Battle - LucasArts	Action
Team Buddies - Psygnosis	Misc.

Nintendo 64

All-Star Baseball 2001 - Acclaim	Sports
Battlezone 64 - Crave Entertainment	Action
Carmageddon - Titus	Action
Daikatana - Kemco	Action
NHL Blades of Steel 2000 - Konami	Sports

Dreamcast

Caesar's Palace 2000 - Interplay	Misc.
Draconus: Cult of the Worm - Crave Entertainment	Adventure
Grand Theft Auto 2 - Rockstar	Racing
Industrial-Spy: Operation Espionage - Tommo	Action
Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000 - Acclaim	Racing
JoJo's Bizarre Adventure - Tommo	Adventure
Maken X - Sega	Action
MDK 2 - Interplay	Action
Nightmare Creatures 2 - Konami	Action
Star Wars: Episode I Racer - LucasArts	Action
Tech Romancer - Capcom	Fighting
Time Stalkers - Sega	RPG
Tomb Raider - Eidos	Action

Neo•Geo Pocket Color

Dynamite Sluggers - SNK	Sports
Last Blade: Beyond the Destiny, The - SNK	Fighting

May

Game Boy Color

All-Star Baseball 2001 - Acclaim	Sports
Brunswick Pro Pool - Vatical Entertainment	Sports
Golf King - Crave Entertainment	Sports
Heroes of Might and Magic - 3DO	Adventure
Metal Gear Solid - Konami	Action
NASCAR 2000 - THQ	Racing
Pro Pool - Activision	Sports
Rally Racing - Konami	Racing
Test Drive Cycles - Infogrames	Racing
Totally Angelica - THQ	Action
Wario Land III - Nintendo	Action
Xena - Titus	Action

PlayStation

Arena Football - Midway	Sports
Countdown Vampires - Bandai	Action
Danger Girl - THQ	Action
Duke Nukem Planet of Babes - GT Software	Action
Gekido - Interplay	Action
Grind Session - SCEA	Sports
Jeremy McGrath 2000 - Acclaim	Racing
Lego Rock Raiders - Lego Media	Action
MediEvil II - SCEA	Action
Mr. Driller - Namco	Puzzle
Rhapsody: A Musical Adventure - Atlus	RPG
Vanishing Point - Acclaim	Racing
WTC: World Touring Car - Codemasters	Racing
Wild Arms 2 - SCEA	RPG

Nintendo 64

Blues Brothers 2000 - Titus	Action
Excitebike 64 - Nintendo	Racing
Looney Tunes Space Race - Infogrames	Adventure
Perfect Dark - Nintendo	Action
PGA European Tour - Infogrames	Sports

Dreamcast

4 Wheel Thunder - Midway	Racing
Arena Football - Midway	Sports
ESPN NBA 2 Night - Konami	Sports
Gauntlet Legends - Midway	Action
Off Road - Interplay	Racing
Renegade Racers - Interplay	Racing
Street Fighter Alpha 3 - Capcom	Fighting
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater - Crave Entertainment	Sports
Viva Soccer - Interplay	Sports

June

Game Boy Color

2001 Tunes - Infogrames	Misc.
Alice in Wonderland - Nintendo	Adventure
Crystalis 2 - Nintendo	RPG
Dark Angel Anna's Quest - Metro 3D	Adventure
Donkey Kong Country - Nintendo	Action
Doug: Quailman to the Rescue - Mattel	Action
Frisbee Golf - Vatical Entertainment	Sports
Hercules - Titus	Action
Jimmy White's Cue Ball - Vatical Entertainment	Sports
Looney Tunes Collector: Alert! - Infogrames	Misc.
Micro Machines V3 - THQ	Racing
MTV Sports: Skateboarding - THQ	Sports
NBA Live 2000 - THQ	Sports
Perfect Dark - Rare	Action
TOCA Tour Racing - Southpeak Interactive	Racing
Tom & Jerry - Mattel	Action
VR Powerboat - Vatical Entertainment	Racing
Wacky Races - Infogrames	Racing

PlayStation

Baldur's Gate - Interplay	RPG
Blaster Master II - Sunsoft	Action
Carmageddon 2 -Interplay	Action
Dragon Valor - Namco-Hometek	RPG
Earthworm Jim - Interplay	Action
In Fisherman Bass Hunter - Take 2 Interactive	Sports
Iron Soldier 3 - Vatical Entertainment	Action
Legend of Dragoon, The - SCEA	RPG
Lunar 2: Eternal Blue - Working Designs	RPG
Major League Soccer - Konami	Sports
Mike Tyson Boxing - Codemasters	Sports
MK Special Forces - Midway	Fighting
Paper Boy - Midway	Action
Polaris Snocross 2000 - Kemco	Racing
Reel Fishing II - Natsume	Sports
Saboteur - Eidos	Action
X-Men: Mutant Academy - Activision	Action

Nintendo 64

AirBoardin' USA - ASCII	Sports
Caesar's Palace - Crave Entertainment	Misc.
Hercules - Titus	Action
Kirby's Dreamland - Nintendo	Action
Looney Tunes: Duck Dodgers - Infogrames	Action
Ogre Battle 64: Person of Lordly Caliber - Atlus	RPG
StarCraft 64 - Nintendo	Strategy
Stunt Racer - Midway	Racing

Dreamcast

Dark Angel: Vampire Apocalypse - Metro 3D	Adventure
Ecco the Dolphin - Sega	Adventure
ESPN Baseball Tonight - Konami	Sports
Fur Fighters - Acclaim	Action
Legend of the Blademasters - Ripcord Games	Action
Microsoft Combat Flight Sim - Konami	Sim
Seaman - Sega	Misc.
Sega GT - Sega	Racing
South Park Rally - Acclaim	Action
Space Channel 5 - Sega	Misc.
Space Invaders - Activision	Shooter
Spec Ops: Omega Squad - Ripcord Games	Action
Virtua Tennis - Sega	Sports
World Series Baseball 2K1 - Sega	Sports

July

Game Boy Color

Barbie Fashion Pack - Mattel	Misc.
Carnivale - Vatical	Action
Pokémon Attack - Nintendo	Puzzle
Power Rangers Lightspeed Rescue - THQ	Action
X-Men: Mutant Academy - Activision	Action

PlayStation

Darkstone - Take 2 Interactive	Adventure
Rampage Through Time - Midway	Action
Speedball 2100 - Empire	Sports

Nintendo 64

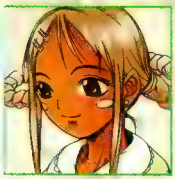
Aidyn Chronicles: The First Mage - THQ	RPG

Dreamcast

D2 - Sega	Adventure
Deep Fighter - Ubi Soft	Fighting
Metropolis Street Racer - Sega	Racing

INDUSTRIAL SPY

Operation Espionage



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Silicon Magazine

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- Unlimited replay value.

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NEC

Sega Dreamcast

UFO

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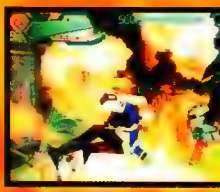
HSU AND CHAN
GAME DESIGNERS
EEK!
ZOIKS! MY ESPRESSO!
IN...
CHAN TURISMO!
HELLO, VIDEO GAMERS! I'M HSU TANAKA, HERE AT THE SHOPPING MALL TO GET BACK IN TOUCH WITH THE COMMON MAN, THAT EVERYDAY, RUN-OF-THE-MILL, TACTLESS, TASTELESS, POOP, DUMB LOAD WHO FEELS NO SHAME AT SPENDING FULL DAYS IN OVER-PRICED SPECIALTY SHOPS WITH NAMES LIKE "SPATULAS 'N STUFF!" I'LL BEGIN IN EARNEST AS SOON AS MY BROTHER CHAN SHOWS UP!
I'M HERE, BROTHER HSU! I WAS JUST OVER AT "WORLD OF TWINE."
WHAT A SELECTION!
SUCH A WONDER, THE MALL! SO MANY DIFFERENT PERSONS FROM SO MANY UNIQUE WALKS OF LIFE! IT'S AN EXCELLENT VEHICLE FOR THE STUDY OF HUMAN NATURE!
...WELL, EXCEPT THAT THEY'RE ALL THIRTEEN YEARS OLD AND THEY ALL SHOP IN THE SAME STORES. BUT IT WORKS IN THEORY!
THISTLE BARN
STUPID TEENAGER WONDERLAND
WHAT SAY WE HEAD OVER TO THE GAME SHOP, CHAN?
A GOOD IDEA, BROTHER HSU! WE MUST KEEP THE PLOT MOVING, AS WE ONLY HAVE ONE PAGE! FORWARD HO!
LOOK AT THAT, HSU... SOME KIND OF EXCITEMENT AT THE GAME SHOP! WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE IS GOING ON?
I DUNNO! A SALE? NEW HARDWARE? A FEMALE WANDERING IN BY MISTAKE?
ROTTIERMIN SOFTWARE EMPORIUM
LET'S SEE!
WHAT?! GRAN TURISMO?!!
WHAT THE HECK IS A TURISMO, AND WHAT MAKES THIS ONE SO GREAT?!
VROOOOM!
REALISTIC SUSPENSION! OOH!
SIR, THIS IS GRAN TURISMO 2! THE SEQUEL TO WHAT IS PERHAPS THE FINEST-
IT'S A RACING GAME!
ON A GOOD DAY I CAN POOP A RACING GAME!!
SINCE WHEN WERE WE RUNNING YOU ON THEM?!
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, SIR, THE DEPTH OF REALISM IN THIS GAME IS AMAZING! REAL CARS! TRUE-LIFE PHYSICS! UPGRADES! OPTIONS! I'VE NEARLY WET MY PANTS WITH JOY!
WAIT...
JUST DID
DANG.
BACK TO THE WORKSHOP, CHAN! THE COMMON MAN ISN'T WORTH THE TROUBLE! WE'VE A GAME TO CREATE!
HSU AND CHAN BURN THE MIDNIGHT OIL!
CODE! CODE LIKE THE WIND!
GRRARR!!
UNTIL...
OOPS, SORRY. I JUST ACCIDENTALLY TOLD CHAN TOLD LINE FROM CHAN TOLD LINE FROM ABOUT THE NURSE AND THE RABBI! HEE HEE!
ANKWAY, HERE IT IS, TANAKA BROTHERS' NEWEST RACER--
BAD MILEAGE 2000!
HEE HEE! THE NURSE AND THE RABBI! WHEW!
YOU WANT REALISM? YOU GOT IT! BAD MILEAGE 2000 FEATURES OVER 500 DIFFERENT CARS, AND UNLIKE CERTAIN "FANTASY" RACERS, THEY'RE ALL IN YOUR PRICE RANGE!
GREMLIN! MATO! VEGA!
WE GOT THE LICENSES FOR A SONG!
AND THESE ARE NO ASSEMBLY-LINE ZOMBIES, NO INDEED! THESE ARE CARS WITH CHARACTER, EACH ONE AUTHENTICALLY TUNED AS IF THEY'D ALREADY BEEN DRIVEN FOR FIFTEEN YEARS!
LISTEN TO THAT AUTHENTIC ODD ENGINE NOISE! THRILL AS THE LEFT TURN SIGNAL COMES ON FOR NO APPARENT REASON!
UPGRADES? EACH CAR IS FULLY CUSTOMIZABLE! LOOK AT WHAT YOU CAN BUY!
A WORKING MUFFLER! JUMPER CABLES! A BRAND-NEW QUART OF OIL!
PARTS ARE US
AND YOU JUST KNOW YOU'RE GONNA NEED TO REPLACE THAT THERMOSTAT.
AIN'T THAT THE TRUTH.
WHAT ABOUT GAME MODES? WELL, IN ADDITION TO THE STANDARD "CAREER" AND "VERSUS" MODES, THERE'S ALSO THE "PASS-INSPECTION" RALLY, THE "WHERE'S-THAT-SMELL-COMING-FROM" MINI-GAME AND, OF COURSE, THE "LET'S-SEE-IF-WE-CAN-SQUEEZE-ONE-MORE-TRIP-TO-VEGAS-OUTTA-THIS-JALOPY" CHALLENGE!
LOOK! ON THE ALPINE TRACK, MY CHARACTER TRIES TO START UP HIS CAR FIVE TIMES. JUMPS UP AND DOWN ON THE HOOD, CURSES PROFUSELY AND THEN GOES BACK TO BED! SUCH REALISM!
BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE! PACKAGED WITH THE GAME IS THE OFFICIAL BAD MILEAGE 2000™ CONTROLLER, AN EXACT REPLICA OF THE DASH-BOARD FROM OUR FIRST CAR.
BESIDES THE WHEEL AND BUTTONS, IT ALSO HAS A CLOCK THAT STOPPED FIVE YEARS AGO, A GAS METER THAT ALWAYS READS JUST ABOVE A QUARTER OF A TANK NO MATTER WHAT, A RADIO PERMANENTLY TUNED TO A COUNTRY/WESTERN STATION, AND AN UNIDENTIFIABLE MOLTEN CANDY SUBSTANCE BONDED TO THE DASH, SLOWLY COLLECTING HAIR AND LINT!
WOW! INSIDE THE GLOVE COMPARTMENT IS A SINGLE MITTEN, A TRIPLE-A MAP OF OHIO, AND A CASSETTE TAPE IN THE GENERAL SHAPE OF A TACO!
C'MON, LET'S TAKE HER FOR A SPIN!
http://www.bmt-isw.com/loulmonkey
OKAY, THEN! BUCKLE UP. HERE WE GO!!!
UM... WE AREN'T SHIFTING JIGGLE THE WIRE UNDER THE RADIO, WOULD YOU?
WHAT'S THAT RATTLING NOISE?
HUH? I DUNNO, I JUST IGNORE IT.
RATTLE RATTLE HON
WHUZZAH!!
EEP! BRAKES WENT OUT!
JUMP JUMP!
HEY! WHOA!
YIKES!
AAAAIIGH!! PULL OVER!! PULL OVER!!
KMMM
KMMM
BOOM!
DRAT. NOW WE HAVE TO WAIT TWO HOURS FOR THE TOW TRUCK.
WE CAME PREPARED, CHAN. SEE? "CAR-SONG KARAOKE."
UNTIL NEXT TIME, VIDEO GAMERS, THIS IS HSU TANAKA, SAYING, "OUCH!"
HSU AND CHAN ARE PROFESSIONAL CARTOON CHARACTERS. DO NOT ATTEMPT AT HOME
THE END.

It's more than run and gun. It's blow and go. Evil super battle ship Dante has been dispatched to blow up the planet. You've been dispatched to stop it. After all, that's what you've been genetically engineered for. Armed with napalm, gravity, fire and paralyzer bombs, you're the only thing standing between her and total destruction of an entire race. With 26 explosive missions, it's action so intense you won't be able to tear yourself away. Bathroom? Maybe next year.

NAPALM BOMBS. GRAVITY BOMBS. PARALYZER BOMBS. FIRE BOMBS. THIS GAME REALLY BLOWS.



SilentBomber

PlayStation

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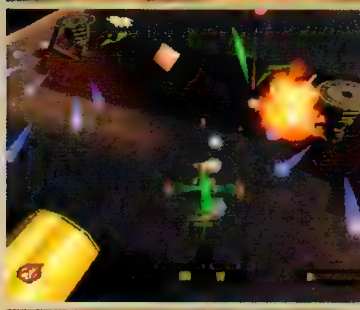
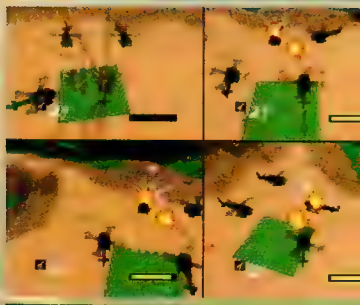
AIR COMBAT™ - A SOLDIER'S CALL TO DUTY®





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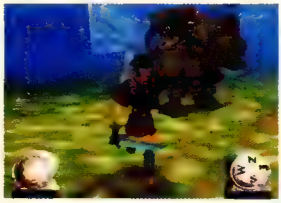
This Month in Previews

WARNING: Previews marked with international symbols may or may not be released in the U.S. They are designed to run on Japanese or European PAL systems. Import at your own risk.

When you work at *EGM*, you're expected to give up a weekend here and there to get caught up on your work. In general, that's OK, because reviewing games sure beats going to Sunday school. But what on Earth could drag us lazy editors out of bed early on a beautiful Sunday morning and actually get us into work before noon? Why, we all wanted to welcome news editor Chris "Secret Turtle" home from his trip to Japan, of course! It had nothing to do with us wanting to "welcome" the PlayStation2's he was carrying with him...really.

So after a brief hello ("Hi Chris. How was Japan? That's nice. Now kindly hand over the PS2s or else."), we got to playing Ridge Racer V, EX3 and co. Since we got this stuff so late in our deadline cycle, we're doing brief first impressions in news this month, with a more thorough report of the PS2 launch games for next issue. Is Sony's new machine all that? Let's just say it has a more impressive launch lineup than Dreamcast had in Japan, but not as nice of one as DC in America (Soul Calibur makes mincemeat out of Street Fighter EX3).



Hey, the N64 2000 lineup may be looking a little light, but at least it's getting a potentially cool RPG! Check out THQ's Aidyn Chronicles in this issue.

Speaking of DC, make sure to check out some exciting previews this month, including new info on Half-Life and another online RPG that will beat Phantasy Star Online to the Japanese market.

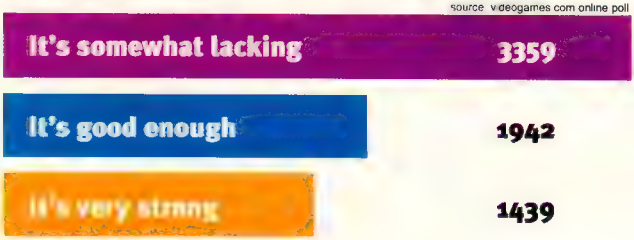
In other console news, PS1 is still going strong, with a healthy preview section this month. N64 on the other hand, is looking quite grim with just one page of coverage in this issue. Sorry folks, we could only come up with two new N64 games this month!

TOP 5 Preview Picks

1.	Half-Life	Dreamcast, Summer 2000
2.	Spider-Man	PlayStation, August 2000
3.	The World is Not Enough	PlayStation2, Late 2000
4.	Rune Jade	Dreamcast, Summer 2000-Jpn
5.	Wild Arms 2	PlayStation, May 2000

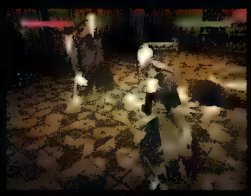
With Tekken Tag delayed, how strong do you feel the PlayStation2 launch software lineup is?

Source: videogames.com online poll



FE, FI, FO, FUM,

I smell the blood of an Englishman.
Be he alive or be he dead,
I'll grind his bones to make my bread.



This is a game of revenge. A dark early 1900s revenge where you'll battle against 20 different creatures using new fighting techniques, combination moves, and fatalities. A revenge that goes deep into 30 game sectors in 8 different worlds including subways, castles, sewers, cities (London|Paris), cemeteries, villages, and underwater.

A gory revenge. An extremely gory revenge.

Soundtrack by Rob Zombie.

MATURE M Animated Violence Animated Blood and Gore ESRB

kalisto

Sega Dreamcast

PlayStation

KONAMI

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IF YOU'RE LUCKY, MAYBE THE SOUND BARRIER
WILL BREAK YOUR FALL.

Sega Dreamcast
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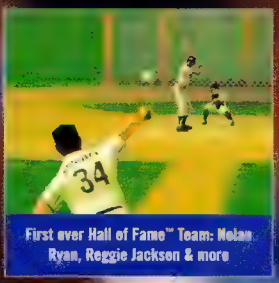
STAR WARS
EPISODE I
RACER

ALL-STAR BASEBALL™ 2001



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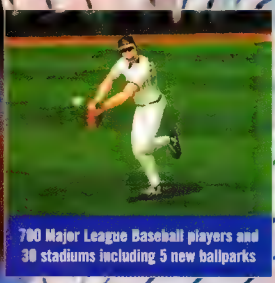

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PREVIEW

"I'd like to see the WRC team have a go at tweaking the handling but unfortunately that's not going to happen."

-Sega's Greg Thomas when quizzed about Sega GT's sloppy handling.

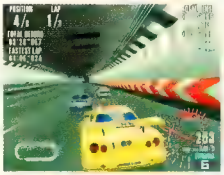
Sega GT

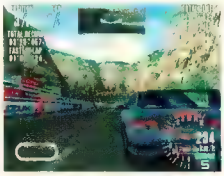
Sega
Sega
1-2
Racing
100%
Now-Japan
None
ww.sega.com
www.sega.co.jp

Gorgeous car models, lighting effects and graphical goodness.

The tracks are too short and boring.

Handling sucks.



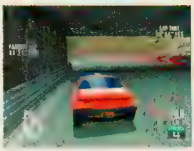


Drivers in Sega GT can choose from the following three classes of cars: Easy, Normal and Hard. Each class has increasingly difficult tracks and tougher cars to drive. The toughest ones are mostly from the GT2/3 variety and are nearly impossible to keep on the road.

JUST LIKE GT

Driving Test

As with Gran Turismo on the PlayStation there are a series of levels in the game that take you through a "driving test." Unfortunately it's nowhere near as involved as the PlayStation game and mostly requires you to simply beat set times in different cars.



Everyone (including us) wants Sega GT to be the first truly great sports car racing game on the Dreamcast. Let's face it, we all want Gran Turismo don't we? Enough of this Test Drive and Roadsters nonsense, we want something to show those PlayStation owners just how much nicer something can look on the DC.

Sorry guys...but Sega GT isn't quite what we'd hoped for. It's certainly an impressive game...and graphically it's gorgeous (although opinions are mixed here as to whether it's much of an improvement over Sega Rally), but it doesn't pack the almighty punch that we'd hoped for. Why? It may have over 100 cars, but it doesn't seem enough—especially when many are tiny Japanese weird-mobiles, and others are simply GT2 and GT3 spec versions of other cars in the game. On top of this, the driving test mode (see sidebar) is a little lackluster, and—most importantly—the handling feels really sloppy and, well, yuck. There are two handling options offered—"Grip" and "Drift"—but both feel over-sensitive and "wafty" as you struggle to keep your car under control. This isn't what you want to see from a game of this type, and you can't help but feel a bit let down by Sega for releasing something that's not quite what we'd all hoped for.

Representatives from Sega of America assure us that things will probably change when the game is released here later in the year (sometime in the summer seems likely)...but it's unlikely that any of the more serious issues (like the floppy handling) will be addressed. Whether we'll see more cars added also seems unlikely.

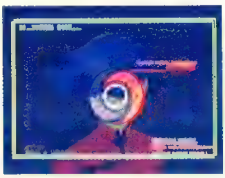
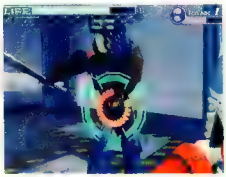
No doubt it'll sell well, and it already is in Japan. Maybe the sequel will get closer to perfection?

WHAT WE WANT TO SEE

Unfortunately this isn't quite Gran Turismo for the Dreamcast, and there are a lot of things that seem somewhat lacking. Before the U.S. launch we'd like to see: More tracks, network play, more involved driving tests, much tighter handling, and more U.S. and Euro cars.

Maken X

Sega
Atlus
1
Action/Adventure
95%
April 2000
None
www.sega.com
Fast frame-rate. Fast action.
Turning around is a problem.
Voice-acting almost as bad as, um, bad.

The same creative team behind Persona, Soul Hackers and Devil Summoner is back at it in their first 3D adventure, cunningly dubbed an FPS (first-person slasher). The results are far more impressive than you might have thought.

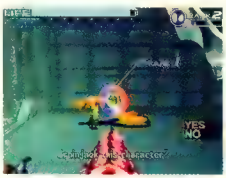
Jacked!

One of the nice things about Maken X, aside from its rich design, is the large number of characters you can "brain-jack." On almost every level, there is a new character that you can possess. Different characters will propel the story line to different localities, each with its own unique look and feel. Accordingly, there are multiple endings depending on which character you beat the game with, so the replay incentive is higher in this game than most other first-person adventures. Sadly, there is no multiplayer mode, but there's always room for that in a sequel! Also, each brain-jackee will cause Maken X to change into a different style of weapon. Cool!

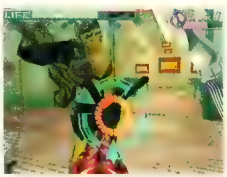
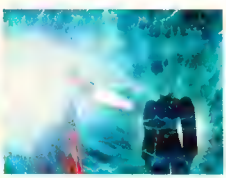
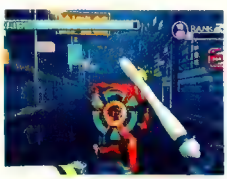
Released in Japan late last year, Maken X was a surprise effort from the creative team behind many of Atlus' hits: Devil Summoner, Soul Hackers and Persona 1 & 2, to name a few. With the power of the Dreamcast, they decided to try to expand upon their previous 2D experience and venture into uncharted territory. Venture they did, emerging with not only something completely 3D, but something that had never really been attempted before, a first-person slasher. Centering around a magical creature named Maken X, Kei (spelled "Kay" in the U.S. version) ends up in a symbiotic relationship with the shape-changing sword. Through a technique called brain-jacking, Maken X can assume control of numerous characters in the game, enabling the game designers to experiment with different attacking styles. The basic control consists of strafing, lock-on functions and a charge-up attack. You can also jump and duck, and while there are some platform elements, they are not too frustrating to complete. Your game experience, minus the cinemas, usually consists of navigating hallways and slashing whomever attacks you. It's pretty standard, except that the enemies all have fairly different attacks, meaning your approach to each one had better be different, or you'll be pushing up daisies in no time. Something you won't find in Quake III or Unreal Tournament anytime soon is the "high-jump over your opponent and slash him in the back of his head" move. Once you get this little technique down, you'll save yourself a lot of agony.

Often feared lost to the import world only, Maken X was wisely snapped up by Sega, who slapped it up with some dodgy voice-over work. Aside from that little flub, it remains to be seen if Sega/Atlus will implement an edit-controller function that would allow swifter turning in the game. When multiple enemies gang up on you , a mouse/keyboard PC-style method of pivoting on the spot would be a great help. The build we've played does not have such a feature.

Nevertheless, anyone looking for a stylish action game need look no further. With multiple characters and endings, Maken X looks like it has the ingredients to keep you coming back. We'll reserve final judgement until we have a reviewable copy, but from here, things look good.



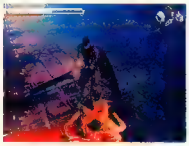
Here's an example of what happens when you beat a man down. Just kidding. This sorry sucker is about to get brain-jacked. Sounds fun!

PREVIEW

Sword of the Berserk: Guts' Rage

	Eidos
	Yuke's
	1
	Action/Adventure
	100%
	March 2000
	None
	www.eidos.com
	It's the bloodiest game ever created.
	Hack n' slash can get old.
	"Puck" the fairy's voice.



Based on a popular manga (comic book) from Japan, Sword of the Berserk is a faithful homage to the original source material. Rarely does a license cough up as much righteous action as Yukes has stuffed into Berserk. If you like games like Final Fight or Streets of Rage, then you may want to check this out.

Based on a long-running manga series (Kentauro Miura's "Berserk"), Guts' Rage centers around the adventures of a man named Gatsu (Guts is his nickname), who, conspicuously, walks everywhere with a gargantuan sword strapped to his back.

Think Final Fight meets D&D, 3D-style, and you might accidentally conjure up images of Eidos's latest acquisition, Sword of the Berserk: Guts' Rage. Cutting to the chase, Berserk is hi-octane, if repetitive, entertainment. It offers possibly the most insane amount of sword swinging this side of Soul Calibur on any home console to date. Sword of the Berserk, when released in Japan, produced fountains and geysers of blood everywhere Guts swung his sword. Apparently Eidos and Yukes (Evil Zone, WWF SmackDown! and Soukaigi) thought that too much was still not enough. The American version of Berserk will feature even more of the red stuff, for no other reason than to make the game more O.T.T.

Beyond the regular staple of hacking and slashing your way through the game, Guts also has a small cache of other weapons and attacks at his disposal. Along with his fists and slide-kicks, he has a miniature rapid-fire crossbow, a powerful gun-shot (limited ammo though), grenades, throwing knives and health-recovery potions. Fortunately, for as many weapons as he has, there is an equal and greater number of monsters he must use them on. Bearing a tattoo on his neck that bleeds whenever any monsters lurk in hiding nearby, Guts finds himself in a beginning-to-end slash-fest that climaxes with him flying into a berserker's rage every so often. Giving the game and manga its namesake, when Guts suffers too much damage, the screen flashes red and he becomes virtually unstoppable. He moves nearly twice as fast and anything that gets in his way will find itself in numerous pieces within a matter of seconds.

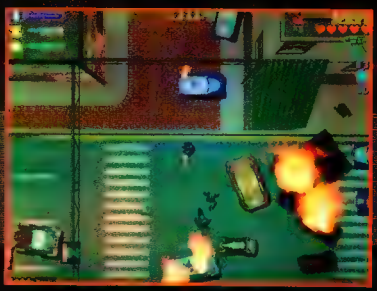
Fans of Soul Reaver will be glad to know that the excellent voice-over team responsible for that game has returned to put the polish on Yuke's all-action adventure game. SotB also features some of the best sound effects you've ever heard. By the time you read this, Eidos may already have Berserk on the shelves. Whenever it does come out, you may want to give this one a close look.

Here are some various examples of our man Guts going buck wild. Instead of toning down the blood, Eidos adds a few buckets!

Prize Box

Carried over unscathed from the Japanese version of Berserk, the Prize Box is Yuke's little way of giving back to the community. Loaded with all manner of Easter Eggs, beating the game on the three different difficulty levels opens up a passel of goodies for diligent gamers. A world history diary is available from the outset to provide background information. Other hidden treats include a movie theater, an art gallery, a level select and a bizarre version of whack-a-mole. Whack-a-mole seems to be popular these days, having also made an appearance in Sonic Adventure. If anything, the DC seems to be cornering the market on W-A-M games faster than anyone.

"Fun? Yes. Funny? Sure. Obscene? Hell yeah."
-EGM
"will become a long-played title in your game library"
- Game Informer
"If entertainment could be measured, GTA2 would bust the scale"
-Gamespy.com



GTA2

Grand Theft Auto is back.

- Completely open & non-linear game play frees you to carve your own way to the top of the crime underworld. Go anywhere. Steal everything. Jack anyone!
- Intelligent gang system - Earn and maintain the respect of gangs to gain the best jobs. Or, play the gangs off against each other in turf wars.
- Fierce playability: against a backdrop of urban anarchy the game play is more absorbing & involving than ever.

The incredibly fast-paced and fluid game play now matched by Sega's 128-bit system makes GTA2 a must-have for the Sega Dreamcast owner's game library.

Sega Dreamcast.

MATURE M ESRB

WWW.GTA2.COM
www.rockstargames.com

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PREVIEW

Industrial-Spy Operation Espionage

UFO Interactive
Hunex
1
Adventure/Strategy
95%
April 2000
None
www.ufointeractive.com

Puts you in control of an elite group of espionage agents.

All you do is tell your agents what to do—you're not in direct control of them.

If you screw up and take too long, it gets very boring.

Some missions take place in a simple, one-floor complex. Others have three floors, with secret passages, trap doors and more.

While one team member is looking for a way to the third floor, others can be taking care of a switch elsewhere.

How Does It Work?

Remember: You can only tell people in your team what to do—you don't actually control them directly. So if you don't tell them what to do when the mission starts, the clock runs up and your agents just sit there waiting. But if you actually want to play the game (of course), you'll have to tell your specialists where to go and what to investigate. For example, if a computer terminal is nearby, you have to specifically tell them to hack into it. Thing is, not all computers contain information that pertains to your mission. So there's a chance you'll waste some time if you're not careful. The more time you waste, the less money you'll receive from your client. Furthermore, when an agent uses one of his/her skills, the Skill Point level goes down. These points will eventually increase again, but only over time. As the boss, you're balancing all aspects of a very time-sensitive mission.

Films like *Mission: Impossible* make the world of espionage look so smooth. In reality of course, these missions would all fall apart if Mr. Phelps wasn't behind the scenes telling people what to do and where to go. In Industrial-Spy Operation Espionage, you're the guy who makes sure everything runs like clockwork.

Your name is simply "The Boss." Think of yourself as a manager of a business. You pick your agents, what mission they go on and what they do while they're on that mission, among other things. You can even tell them to think in some instances.

There are a total of eight agents to choose from, each with his/her own skill set. Some are better at hacking into computers to obtain sensitive data, while others are better at disarming a set of laser trip wires. And while it may sound action-packed, it's not. The game prides itself on having a rather complex adventure/strategy sort of feel. You're telling your people what to do, down to the last detail in some instances.

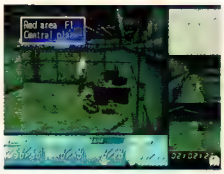
Companies come to you looking for your "special" services, and pay you handsomely if you complete the mission in the time they request.

Once you select what mission to take, you're given a rough layout of the area (usually an office, compound, castle or other facility). Your Team Leader also lets you know what kind of skills you'll need for the mission. Then you select your people (most missions allow you three or four members for one mission). Finally, you place where they start from and the mission begins.

Objectives are clearly stated, so it's a matter of finding out where to go first and what may need to be completed before you finish your main goal. For example, in one instance your main objective is to retrieve data from a computer in the heart of a science building. To get there, you have to disarm a series of security measures. But to do that, you have to find the right computer terminal, special operations data and so on. Later missions introduce extremely tricky variables, like traps, armed guards, secret passages and much more. And as you complete missions, you're awarded points to build up your team's abilities. This way, they'll be able to more easily take on later stages.

There are 10 levels in all, groups of which are opened up as you advance in the game.

In some stages, it's imperative to use all of your agents at once in order to complete a particular mission in the time allotted.



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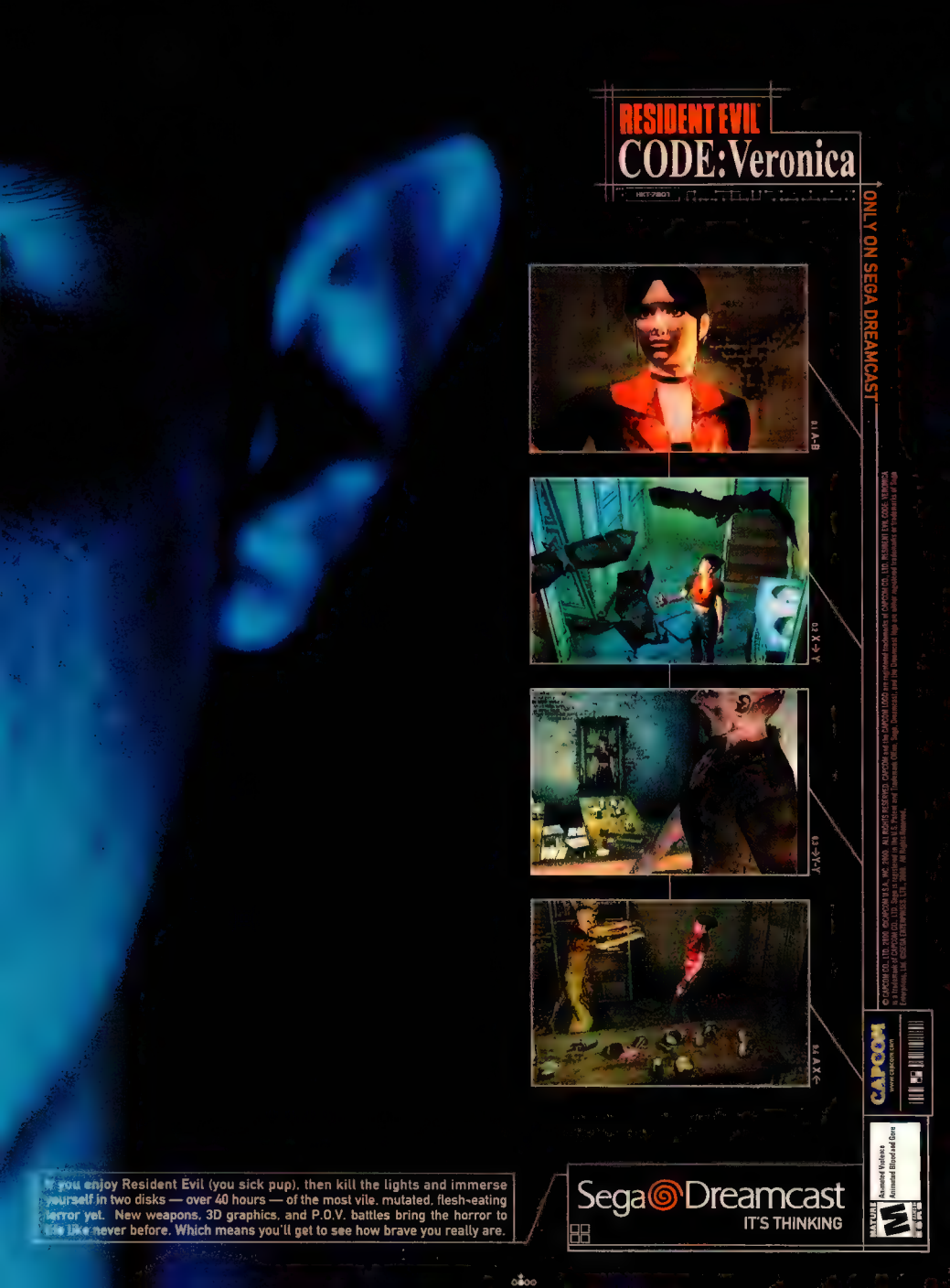
YOU MAY LAUGH IN THE FACE OF FEAR.
BUT IT'LL BE A NERVOUS, UNCONVINCING LITTLE LAUGH.


RESIDENT EVIL
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0.1 A-B
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If you enjoy Resident Evil (you sick pup), then kill the lights and immerse yourself in two disks — over 40 hours — of the most vile, mutated, flesh-eating terror yet. New weapons, 3D graphics, and P.O.V. battles bring the horror to life like never before. Which means you'll get to see how brave you really are.
Sega Dreamcast
IT'S THINKING
CAPCOM
www.capcom.com
MATURE
Animated Violence
Animated Bloodand Gore

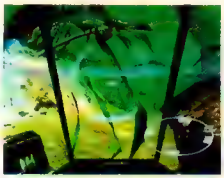
PREVIEW

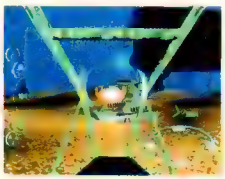
SUB CULTURE

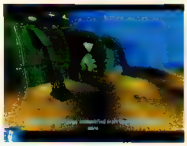
At $2 billion per boat, the Seawolf is the most expensive nuclear attack submarine ever built...our tax dollars hard at work.

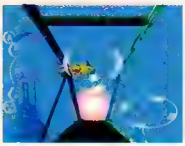
Deep Fighter

Ubi Soft
Criterion Studios
1
Action
75%
Spring 2000
PC
www.ubisoft.com
Introduces a new genre to the Dreamcast.
FMV mission briefings are forced and heavily over-acted.
Turning fish into chum with one laser shot.









While much of Deep Fighter's graphic appeal comes from impressive lighting effects, the draw-in distance could use some work. Most of the undersea world is hazy beyond 100 yards or so. Still, it's not terrible by any standards. We were just hoping for more since the Dreamcast is seemingly powerful enough to handle the task.

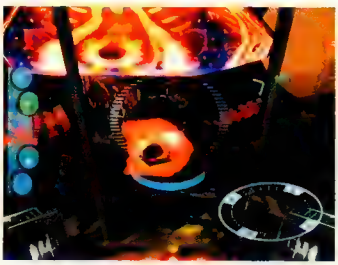
FMV WEIRDNESS

We Are Devo

We realize this is early blue-screen FMV, but we couldn't resist making fun of it anyway. After all, it's one of the perks of getting early game builds. OK, picture a very serious mission briefing in which the commander warns of the dangers of hunting nuclear matter. It's all very stern and formal (and over-acted). But once in the sub, the radio chatter is as juvenile as a day at the *EGM* offices. Keep in mind these scenes will look totally different in the final game once the backgrounds are placed in.

We couldn't help but think of Wing Commander as we viewed Deep Fighter's stiff FMV mission briefings and goofy in-game character interaction. "Let's get back to base and get a beer!" exclaims one of your allies as he/she blasts an enemy. Unfortunately, the game is full of cutscenes of similar grade. Thankfully, the rest of the title is looking much more promising.

Piloting a small sub in a vast, 3D undersea environment is the premise of this mission-based fighter. Your people live on the ocean floor in a complex of underwater structures. Sadly, the vibe is anything but peaceful. Everyone from pirates to giant squids are trying to crush your race. Ultimately, the goal is to keep the enemies at bay long enough for your chums to build a mothership capable of transporting the entire colony to peaceful waters.



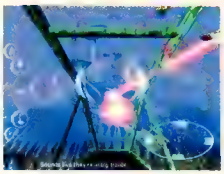
Does this plot sound familiar? It should since it doesn't stray too far from the same formula used by countless space combat sims. No biggie; it's a nice change of pace to do it underwater at least.

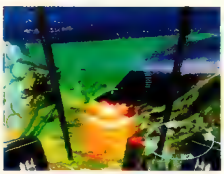
We were lucky enough to get a 75 percent version of the game which had just about everything except the FMV backgrounds. It's safe to say it's a slow-starter, but once the first few missions are complete, things start to get more interesting.

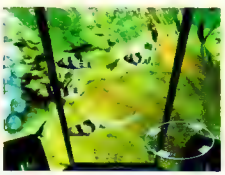
Many of the 50 missions are puzzle-based and void of combat altogether. Sometimes you're gathering materials for the mothership construction, at other times, however, it's full-on combat. Eight different subs, 12 weapons and nine separate tools are at your disposal. Tools allow you to scoop items off the ocean floor, harpoon fish, paralyze enemies and so on. Weapons are mostly of the laser variety, but a couple "big-blast" guns exist.

While the missions provide plenty of "official" activity, simply exploring the ocean floor, finding new and exciting things to play with, is fun. Mingling with the fish, or more aptly, harassing them, is good for a laugh as well.

Despite the limited draw distance and the sketchy FMV sequences, Deep Fighter has enough gameplay and originality to warrant the attention of DC owners when it's released next month.







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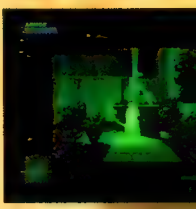

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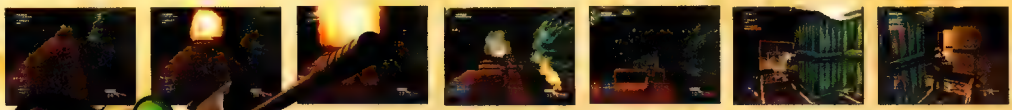

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PREVIEW GALLERY

50 The number of Game of the Year awards the PC press has awarded to Sierra and Valve's Half-Life.

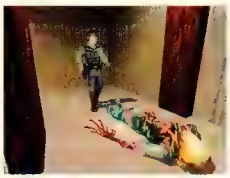
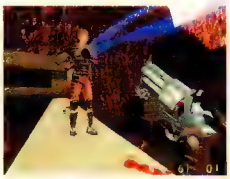
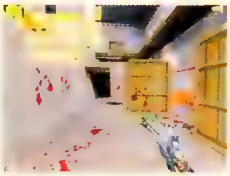
Half-Life

The critically acclaimed, totally kick-ass PC game Half-Life is headed to the DC this **summer**. This first-person shooter is no Doom or Quake clone—with lifelike environments, various characters to interact with, an immersive story line and a tense (almost survival-horrorish) atmosphere, this masterpiece has changed the FPS genre forever.

Now, **Sierra Studios** is bringing the experience home to console owners, with development help from **Captivation Digital Laboratories**, **Gearbox Software** and **Valve**. They're going to improve a few things to take advantage of the DC's power, like up the polygon count and dress up the lighting effects a bit. This version will also feature an all-new, exclusive one-player mission that centers around one of the security guards of the facility that gets attacked by other-worldly creatures.

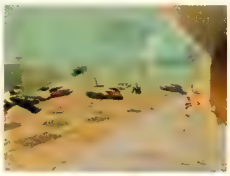
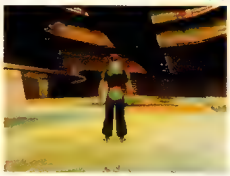
We don't have anything to report on the multiplayer aspect (if any). Still, the one-player game is worth checking out all on its own.

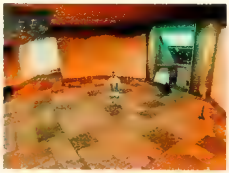
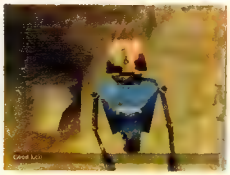
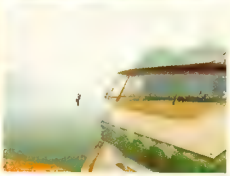
Shown here are screens from the PC version of the game.

Omikron

Developed by **Quantic Dream** for **Eidos**, Omikron is a port of the reasonably successful PC role-playing/adventure that features David Bowie as both a character in the game...and as a contributor to the soundtrack. A sprawling sci-fi epic, Omikron is a story of a 'nomad soul' (you) who can possess anyone in the world in order to pursue his tasks. Watch out for it in stores this **summer**.

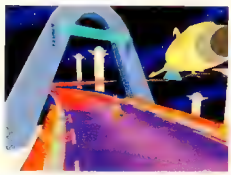
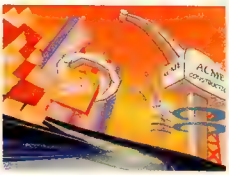



Looney Tunes: Space Race

All the screens you see below are real—trust us when we say **Infogrames'** LT: Space Race looks like a full-blown Warner Bros. cartoon. The animation, frame-rate and graphics are just incredible.

This one- to four-player game (due out in **October**) features 12 tracks spread over six worlds, six characters (with several more hidden), more than 1200 lines of dialogue, and even a pinball VMU mini-game.

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Castlevania's 12th and bloodiest incarnation. Step into this tangled-trap-filled castle, ready to whip and slash these suckers to Hell and back.

D2
Part real-time third-person adventure, part first-person shooter, D2 combines all of these elements into one highly anticipated stew.

Lion King 2
Sing, dance, create, and romp through the Pride Lands with Kiara, Kovu, Timon, Pumbaa, and all your favorite characters from the movie!

ESPN Baseball
Far fans of the ESPN TV productions, this game is designed to represent the coverage as well as the game itself. A sports fans dream!

Dark Angel Vampire Apocalypse
A gothic fantasy adventure in which you play as Anna who's trying to discover the secret behind her superhuman powers.

Seaman
A game, in one sense, and a virtual existence sort of experiment in another. Highly addictive.

Shenmue
Absolutely stunning visuals are present in this action/adventure title that clearly demonstrates the potential of the Dreamcast.

ESPN NBA 2 Night
High realism comes to the courts with everything there is in the real game, including the media coverage.

Armada II
An RPG set in an Asteroids-like setting a thousand years in the future.

Metropolis
Two miles of various cities reconstructed and weather conditions—like rain, wind, and fog—will factor in to your race. A great street racer.

Star Trek New Worlds
Prepare to enter the most exciting Star Trek universe of all time! The first strategy action game to be created in real 3D!

PLAYSTATION

Carmageddon
Road rage takes on a whole new meaning in this murderous, high-speed action game. Enter a place where vehicular manslaughter is sport.

Arena Football
From the makers of the popular NFL Blitz series, Midway, this game goes one step farther in the "no-holds-barred" football arena.

Chase the Express
A Resident Evil-style game from Sony that's sure to keep you on the edge of your seat.

Dead or Alive 2
In Tecmo's latest Dead or Alive installment, you'll find multi-level stages, a Tag Match mode, and new characters such as Helena, an opera singer.

Rampage Through Time
First they destroyed the world, then the universe. Now those rampaging monsters are out to obliterate time itself!

Grind Session
With a hardcore approach, Sony takes its turn entering the ever-popular skateboarding game park.

Spider-Man
Activision is bringing Spider-Man to the PlayStation in grand fashion. Loads of bad guy bashin'!

The Legend of Dragoon
This game from Sony is a combination of scrolling fighting action and platform jumping that has a distinctly old-school flavor to it.

Messiah
It was foretold that the messiah would return after 2000 years. Apparently, he caught an earlier flight.

Lunar 2
The success and level of interest in the first Lunar assures that we get the sequel. RPG fans should set some time aside for this.

Star Trek Red Squad
The Star Trek titles continue to warp to the PlayStation. Be sure to beam aboard for this adventure.

Earthworm Jim 3D
After Jim is knocked unconscious by a conk on the head with a cow, he must travel the multiple layers of his id and make his way back to reality.

NINTENDO 64

Conker's Bad Fur Day
Conker awakes to find himself in a scene out of *Saving Private Ryan*... Our happy squirrel friend is thrust into a violent, M-rated, very ADULT world.

Looney Tunes Duck Dodgers
Uncover the powerful devices planted by Marvin the Martian and thwart his dastardly plan as Daffy Duck's futuristic alter ego, Duck Dodgers.

Mortal Kombat Special Forces
Join forces with Sonya Blade and Jax as they search for arch-nemesis Kano Well-thought-out story line, appealing to both MK fans and casual gamers!

Spider-Man
Activision's hoping to fully realize Spidey's potential in dynamic 3D. You gotta love swingin' from ledge to ledge...that never gets old.

X-Men Mutant Academy
This installment from the popular comic franchise features 13 characters, including favorites like Wolverine, Gambit, Iceman and others.

GAMEBOY COLOR

Lion King 2
Take this version of Lion King anywhere you go, including the movies.

Resident Evil
One of the most intense Game Boy Color System titles ever. A direct conversion of the original PlayStation blockbuster.

San Francisco Rush
The only driving game you can play while actually driving your car! All of the fun of the arcade game packed into a portable cart.

Spider-Man
You didn't think Spidey would forget about the GameBoy Color, did you? There's plenty of adventure and web-slinging action on this cart.

X-Men Mutant Academy
This game features a state-of-the-art fighting engine and stunning animations, plus real-time character morphing and battle damage.

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The Coolest Recent Releases

Nightmare Creatures 2
19th century London is threatened by an onrush of gruesome beasts controlled by the evil Adam Crowley in this highly atmospheric game.

Resident Evil Code Veronica
Play as either Claire or Chris Redfeild in Capcom's latest survival horror title. Sure to be nothing short of a huge hit on the Dreamcast.

Grand Theft Auto 2
The insanely popular 2D gangster game gets updated, improved and enhanced for Sega's box. Not for children...or the feint hearted.

Army Men World War
This sequel to the hit Army Men 3D dares you to battle the Tan nemesis in 25+ missions over six different terrains. All-new weapons await you...

Baldur's Gate
In the same vein as AD&D, the region around Baldur's Gate is in turmoil. A shortage of metal is threatening the commoners and they need your help.

Gauntlet Legends
Midway's popular update of the ancient arcade game brings the whole thing into 3D. Best played with three friends (or enemies.)

Perfect Dark
The one everyone is waiting for. Due for an April release...the follow-up to GoldenEye could well be one of the most successful games ever.

StarCraft 64
The conversion of the top-selling PC realtime strategy game has been on the way for some time. Make sure you get yours first.

WCW Mayhem
All the action on the mats and off are in this WCW-licensed game. Great gameplay with lots of options.

Monster Rancher Battle Cards
Following the trend of monster-raising games making good card battle games, this franchise gets reinvented for Game Boy.

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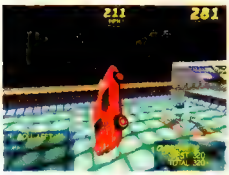
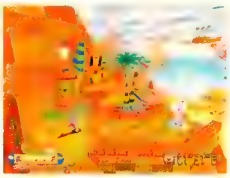
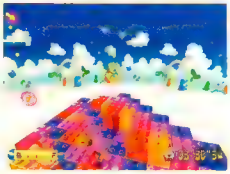
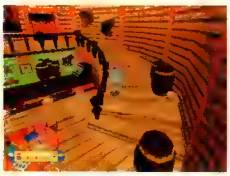
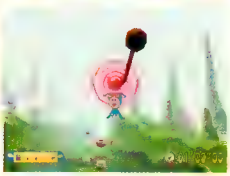
Rush 2049

By all indications, 2049 carries the Rush tradition to the DC platform with flying colors. It's tough to tell if the driving physics are closer to the last N64 version, or completely new. The cars turn hard and sharp with lots of tire squealin' and smoke. Shortcuts, stunt tracks (great fun) and cars that resemble Hot Wheels are par for the course. Four-player and a kickin' soundtrack round out this **spring** release, **Midway** game.



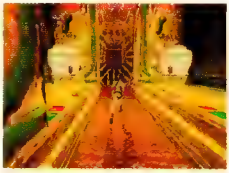
Super Magnetic Neo

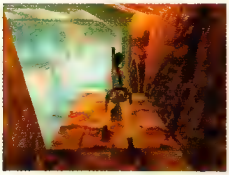
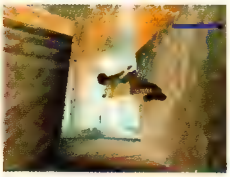
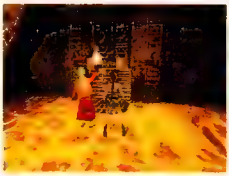
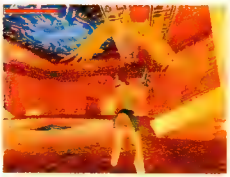
Super Magnetic Neo is **Crave's** latest offbeat acquisition from Japan. If psychedelic 3D platformers like Rayman 2 are your cup of tea, be sure to check out Neo for his misadventures in Pao Pao Amusement Park. By changing polarities, Neo can use his magnetic head to pull and repel objects and enemies. From what we've seen of the Japanese version, Neo is promising and inspiring. Look for it in **Q3 2000**.

Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation

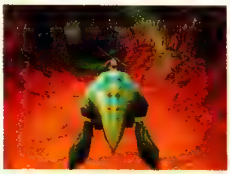
This should be out in the shops by the time you read this. It's Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation, it's by **Core Design** and **Eidos,** it's basically a port of the much better-looking PC version of the game...but now it runs in silky-smooth 60 frames per second. Worth a look. Enjoy.



Quark

This fantasy adventure title is from U.K.-based **Quantic Dream**, the team behind Omikron. Little is known about it so far, but we do know Quark is one of the mystical-beast-and-elfin-creature-filled planets you can explore. Note: The shots at right are from the PC version, but Quantic Dream promises the DC version will look just as good. No publisher has been announced. There's also talk of a PS2 version coming sometime later.



VIRTUA COP BRUTALITY

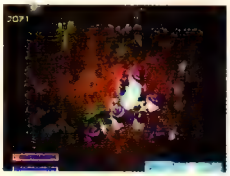
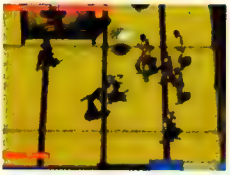
Like so many others out there, we were appalled by the acquittal of the officers who gunned down Amadou Diallo in New York. Help put a stop to police brutality by learning more about it. Check out Amnesty International's site: http://www.amnesty-usa.org/rightsforall/police/

Virtua Cop 2

Before the Dreamcast was released, much speculation was made about whether **Sega** would release a "Sega Ages" collection chock-full of Model 2 classics. After all, Sega's 128-Bit monster had specs that surpassed even the Model 3 board. While we wait for VF2, both Gunblades, Daytona and Rally, Sega offers us an updated Virtua Cop 2. There's a little good news, and a lot of bad news. The good news is that we now have another game that uses our dusty DC light guns. Unfortunately, VC2 is a disappointing port of the PC port of the Saturn version. That's right, VC2 is a PC port. Sure, the graphics have been touched up a bit from the PC game (mainly texture quality and frame-rate), but not much else has been enhanced. If you've never played VC2 before, go check out this game—in an arcade. VC2 is out **now** in Japan.

Rune Jade

The first online RPG to hit the Dreamcast may not be Phantasy Star Online after all. **Hudson Soft** has announced the latest details for their online RPG Rune Jade, set for release this **summer** in Japan. Gameplay will be similar to Diablo, with a 3/4 isometric view of your surroundings. In the one-player game, players build up their stats by dungeon crawling, while multiplayer action takes place on the Internet. Available player classes include: knights, ninjas, martial artists and magicians. It's still unknown whether Rune Jade will have a set number of dungeons or use randomly generated ones for players to explore. The likely scenario is that there will be a limited number of "locations," each with its set of randomly generated levels. Definitely something to look for.

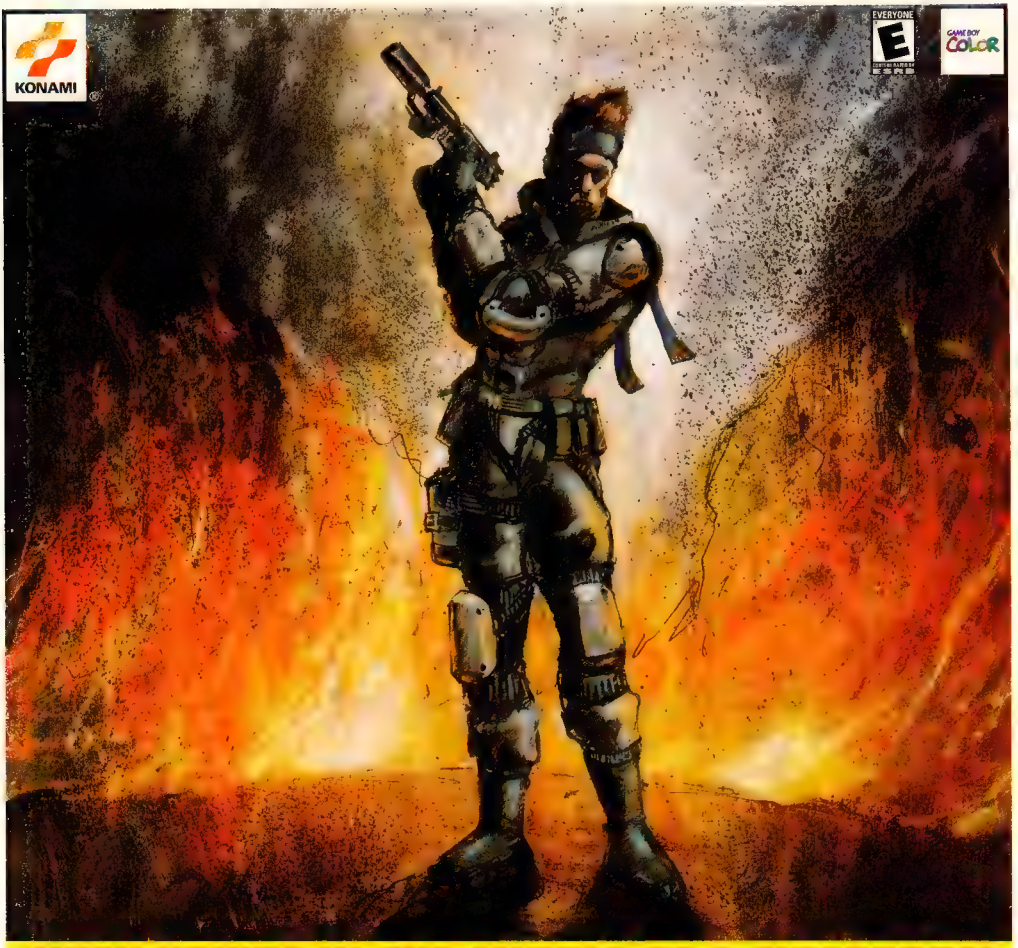
Netto-de-para

The Dreamcast gets another online gaming booster from **Takuyo** called Netto-de-para—a hybrid board game/dating simulator. You move your lovelorn character around the board, and when he lands on a space with a girl, a number of options arise. Your ultimate goal is to get a "good ending." As if that wasn't interesting enough, get this: You can also play this game online with three other people! Wow. It's just a hunch, but this game probably won't make it overseas. Aww...

KONAMI

EVERYONE

GAME BOY COLOR



WHEN YOU'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF A FIRESTORM,

WITH THE FREE WORLD COUNTING ON YOU TO SINGLE-HANDEDLY FOIL A TERRORIST NUCLEAR NIGHTMARE,

KICKBALL STARTS TO SEEM A LITTLE SILLY.

GAME BOY COLOR

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Sega Dreamcast | IT'S THINKING | INTERNET GAMING

NOW IT'S ON THE NET UNLEASHING THE ULTIMATE HORROR:

YOUR FELLOW AMERICANS

Point of Origin: Eugene, Oregon

Screen Name: Cap'nCarnage

"I stuck a cat in your rocket, you backass Tuscaloosa cracker. He's in there chewing your mice. But you probably eat mice yourself when you run out of possum, you monster truck-loving, buck-toothed hillbilly. And you other two mentally challenged dopes: hang up, I [illegible]

Player-fiction | Time Remaining: 00:08:05 | Total Mice On Board: [illegible]

ChuChu Rocket!

Point of Origin: Golden Palms Rest Community, Tempe Arizona

Screen Name: Peaches

Time Remaining: 00:00:00

Total Mice On Board: 329

01

02

03

04

Point of Origin: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Screen Name: JuliusSqueeze

"Cap'nCarnage? What are you captain of? The Orlando Survivalist Granola Militia? Maybe you should stop whacking pine trees and focus on the cat in your rocket—oh, holy crap, I'm the blue rocket!"

Time Remaining: 00.00.00

Total Mice On Board: 0

Point of Origin: Tuscaloosa, Alabama

Screen Name: WhiteLightning

"Shut up, Cap'nCarnage, you don't know bull-diddly doo. I don't love monster trucks I am not dumb. I had to go to the crapper is how the cat get in. I am smart. I went to State. For too years. So you can just kiss my chu chu."

Time Remaining: 00.00.00

Total Mice On Board: 0+1cat

MODEM

EVERYONE

E

ESRB

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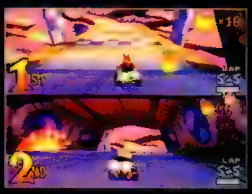
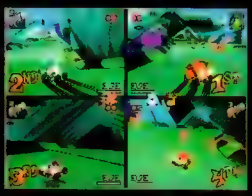
ChuChu Rocket

For the first time ever Team Sonic presents your chance to go online and face wacko opponents from all across this great nation. Lead stampeding rodents into your rocket in a race against time while you sick vicious kitties on rival ships through more than 75 massive levels and five different modes.

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
NAUGHTY DOG
I GOT YOUR
HAND SIGNAL
RIGHT HERE
BUDDY.





It's not driving. It's a motorized beat-down. Leave skid marks on 25 different tracks. Reduce your fellow drivers to roadkill. And if you're man enough to survive the hairpin turns, you'll score a TURBO boost. Unless, of course, you get 86'ed by a TNT crate. Plug in the Multi Tap adaptor and up to four players can race to the ugly finish. With over 12 playable characters in all. Basically, it's a full-blown war on wheels.

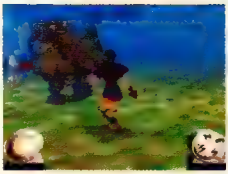
www.playstation.com

Once he gets behind the wheel, things get ugly.

THE FALL GUY

The Unknown Stuntman song, sung by Lee Majors..."Well, I'm not the kind to kiss and tell, But I've been seen with Farrah. I've never been with anything less than a nine, so fine. I've been on fire with Sally Field, gone fast with a girl named Bo. But somehow they just don't end up as mine, so fine. It's a death-defying life I lead, I'll take my chances..."

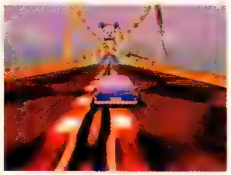
Aidyn Chronicles: The First Mage

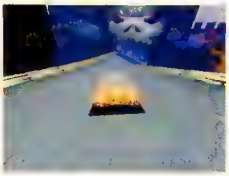


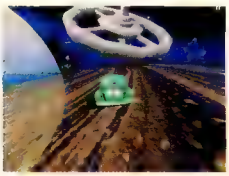
It's no secret the N64 has been lacking in the RPG department. Up until The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time came along, the only RPG N64 owners were able to experience was Quest 64—and we all know what that game was like. Now **THQ** and **H2O Entertainment** are bringing us this hybrid 3D RPG adventure, the design of which is being lead by Dragon Quest veteran Chris Klug. You control Alaron (the main guy who's trying to become the greatest mage ever known) and three other adventure-seekers (you pick three from a cast of 10) through a variety of locales, using the stuff RPGs are best known for (weapons, magic, healing herbs, etc.). In addition, Aidyn features different types of weather and daytime/nighttime cycles very similar to Zelda. However, Aidyn is unlike most RPGs in that it features several non-linear aspects—although the degree of non-linearity is not yet known. The game also uses the 4MB Expansion Pak for enhanced visuals. Look for the game sometime in **July**.

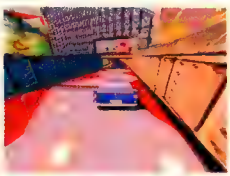
Stunt Racer 3000

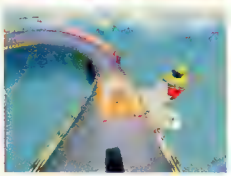
We haven't played SR 3000 yet, but its cool, futuristic retro look has our attention. No doubt Boss Studios will use a proven game engine to fuel this roller coaster-inspired thrill ride. Our friends at Videogames.com assure us it's fast and fortified with high jumps, shortcuts and turbo boosts aplenty. Stats include: 12 tracks, 12 upgrade-ready cars and five boss-driven cars. **Midway** will release SR 3000 this **spring**.

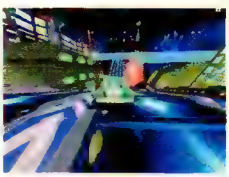




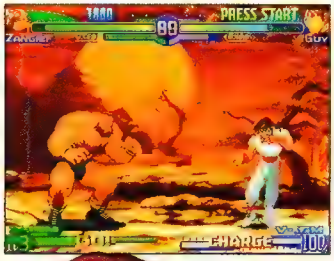


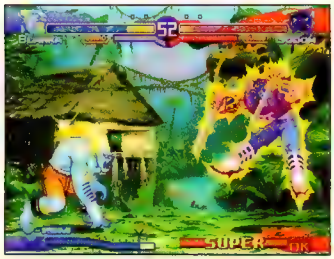






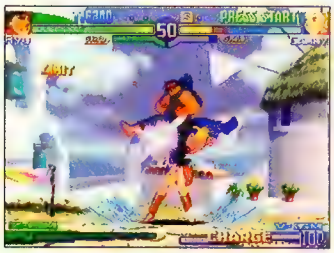
Alien? Aardvark? Mutant platypus?
Okay... we admit it.
We don't know what the @!#?*! he is either... but we do know he rocks!
A title which stands on its own
-PSExtreme
Perfect for gamers of all ages
-CDMag.com
Puzzle Game of the Year
An awesome update of the original
-EGM
9 out of 10-challenging, addictive & fun
-happypuppy.com
Q*bert
www.atari.com
ATARI
PlayStation
EVERYONE
E
MASBRO Interactive
WINNER
EGM 1999
GAMERS' CHOICE AWARD

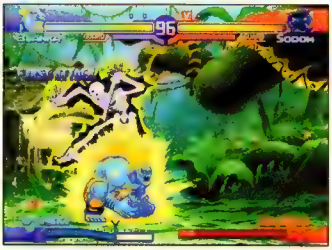


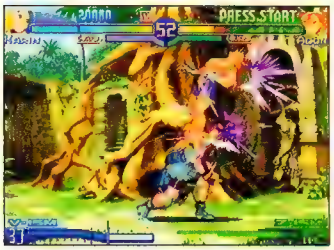


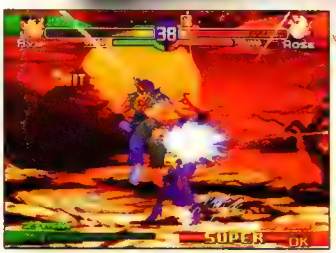
"Better Than Arcade Perfect!"
– GAME FAN

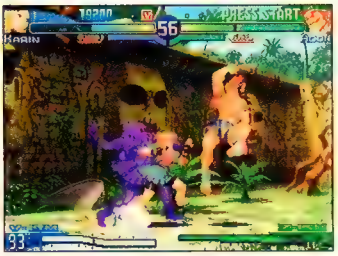
"STREET
PERFE
– GAME INFORMER





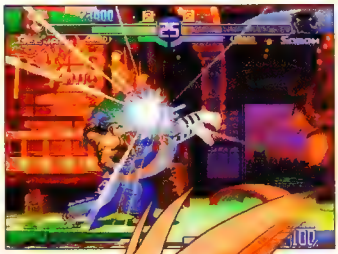


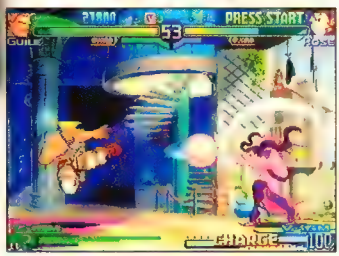


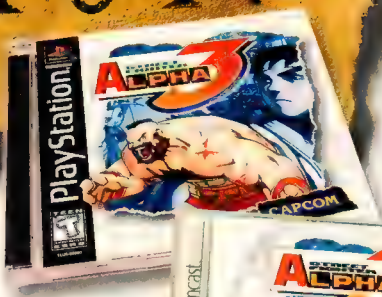


CAPCOM EDGE™

FIGHTER CTION"







Street Fighter Alpha 3 rocks your world with new features and astonishing arcade perfection. Choose from over 30 characters, each with 3 different fighting styles. Street Fighter Alpha 3 is loaded with new enhancements and modes of play – like the around-the-world, skill building World Tour Mode and amazing Dramatic Battle brawl. If it's a fight you're looking for, this is your game!

PlayStation®

Sega Dreamcast.

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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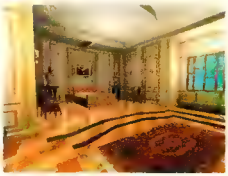
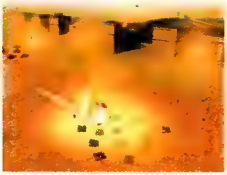
The World Is Not Enough

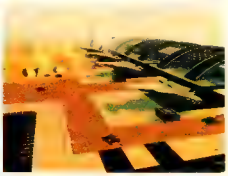
Electronic Arts has secured the rights to James Bond games for the foreseeable future, and one of the first out of the gate will be the Quake III engine-powered 3D action/adventure/shooter based on the last movie. The team working on the project will be posting updates on the development of the game on http://007.ea.com if you're interested in keeping an eye on things before it's released **later this year**.

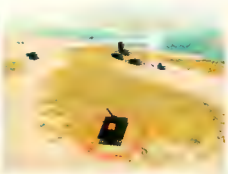


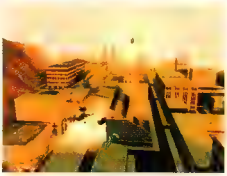
War Monkeys

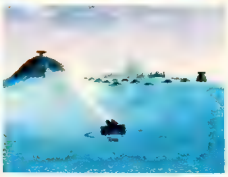
Despite the name, War Monkeys is a serious 3D, real-time strategy game. The depth of field alone is awesome. You can nail an enemy tank from a distance of 25 kilometers and witness the whole event. In addition, the beefy game engine can display up to 200 individual units on screen at once. To complement the futuristic theme, Charleton Heston narrates. **TalonSoft** will publish War Monkeys this **fall.**





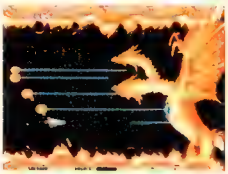


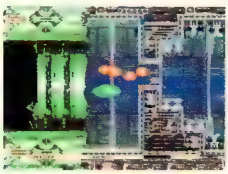


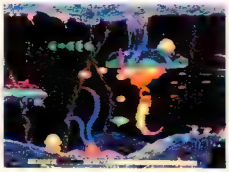


Gradius III & IV

Konami's Gradius III & IV collection proves that the PS2 can more than handle its share of 2D creamblasts. Those of you who have already played these two shooters in the arcade will know that many of Gradius' trademark themes and enemies are resurrected once again (the fire level, the tech level, the biohazard level, etc.). This collection is part of Konami's five title lineup for the PS2, and for many gamers, a must-have. Gradius III & IV will grace the system on **April 13**.

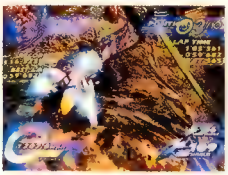






Hresvelgr: Formula High-Powered

Hresvelgr (we can't pronounce it either) could be that first-generation WipeOut equivalent we had for the PlayStation. This futuristic racer will sport eight teams with a total of 16 pilots in the Grand Prix mode. Hresvelgr is developed by **Gusto** and is due out **May 25** in Japan.



THE
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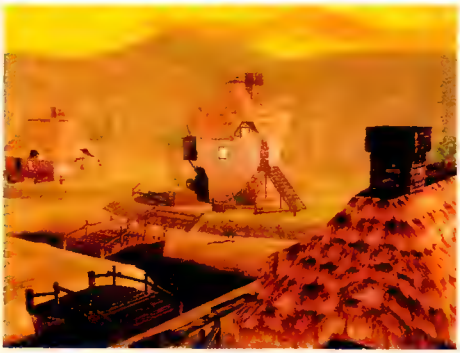
"J**** f*****g C***** I've never seen so many people bum rush a store before."

We sent News Editor Chris Johnston to Tokyo to report on the PS2 launch and pick up some machines...and this was the content of his first communication back to home base.

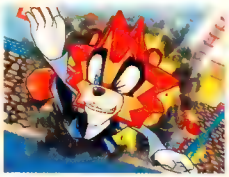
Dark Cloud

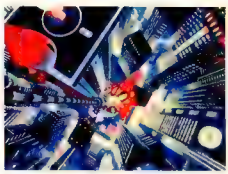
Although not shown in any kind of "hands-on" playable form at the PlayStation Festival, Dark Cloud was demonstrated by representatives from **SCEI** on the main stage in front of a large audience. Details are still sketchy as the game isn't due for release until **later this year**, but what we saw was incredibly impressive. Looking like a cross between The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time and Actraiser, the game boasts a very action-oriented RPG segment that is complemented by a fairly comprehensive-looking resource management game in the style of Bullfrog's Populous or Powermonger. Graphically it's certainly one of the most impressive-looking PS2 demos to date with some jaw-dropping real-time lighting effects that give the game a "CG cartoon" look and feel.



Be On Edge

"Stylized 3D cartoon music games" are establishing themselves as something of a new genre and **SCEI/GONZO's** Be On Edge has a lot in common with older games like PaRappa or UmJammer. The gorgeous visuals shown here are generated in real time as you tap buttons on the PS2 joypad in time with some seriously cool techno/industrial music. The story they tell changes depending on how well you keep in time.





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FINALIST EGM 1999 GAMERS' CHOICE AWARD

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NEOGEO POCKET COLOR

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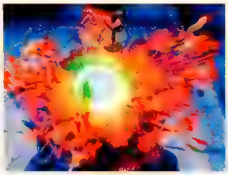
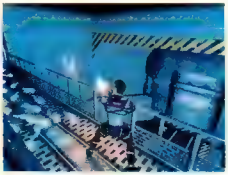
PS2 Crash & Ape

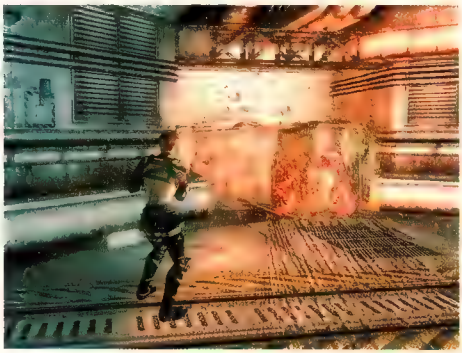
Maybe it was just corporate willy-waving, or maybe it was an indication of things to come, but both Crash Bandicoot and the apes from Ape Escape were in evidence at the PlayStation Festival in Tokyo in late February. Hmm...a sign of things to come maybe?

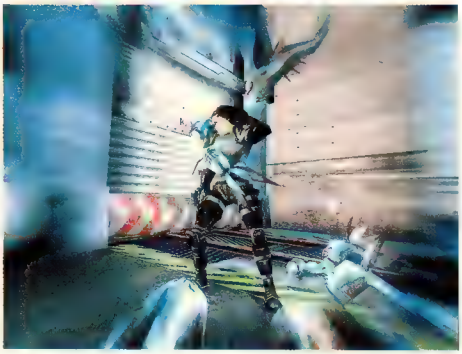
Extermination

Headed up by members of the team that created Ape Escape, **Deep Space** is a new group within the **SCEI** empire. Their first game, Extermination, is still very early in development but is shaping up to look like a cross between Syphon Filter and Resident Evil. Imagine a 3D action adventure with lots of pulsating, gooey-looking mutants and tons of firepower. As you'd expect it looks gorgeous.



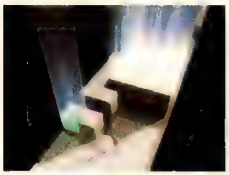


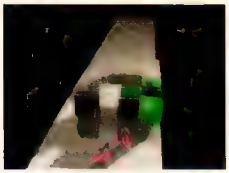


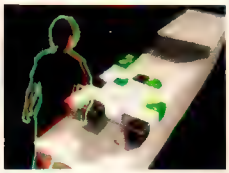


IQ Remix+

Just like its PlayStation predecessors, IQ Remix+ has been developed by **SCEI's Sugar & Rockets** team and is basically another alteration to the tried and tested 3D puzzle game. Obviously the graphics have been seriously enhanced—but it's odd to see that the action now focuses on a single character as opposed to numerous as seen in the confusingly named PS game IQ Final. IQ Remix+ is set for release in Japan in **Q2**.







Snowboard Supercross SSX

This is one of the first U.S.-developed PS2 games to be shown and is currently on course for release in Japan through **EA Square** at the end of **March**. Imagine a cross between Cool Boarders and Beetle Adventure Racing, and you're pretty much there with this one. It's very impressive to look at—but most notable is the sense of scale you get from the visuals. It really feels like you're hurtling down a mountain.

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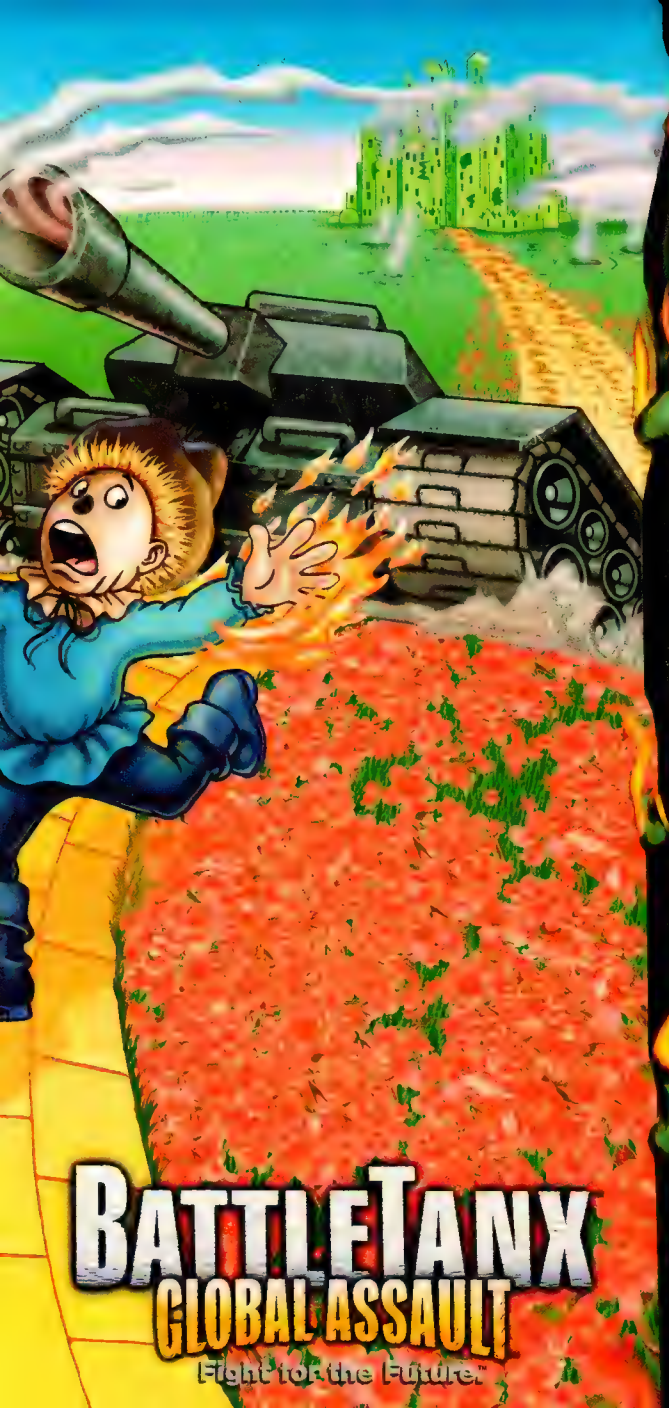

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PREVIEW

Spider-Man

MOVIE UPDATE

After years of delays, the live-action Spider-Man flick—due out late 2001—is nearly ready to begin filming. Sam Raimi (*Evil Dead II*, *A Simple Plan*) has signed to direct, while casting rumors have everyone from Leo DiCaprio to Jude Law donning Peter Parker's red-and-blue leotard.

Publisher:	Activision
Developer:	Neversoft Entertainment
Players:	1
Genre:	Action
% Done:	60%
Release:	August 2000
Also On:	N64
Web Address:	www.activision.com
The Good:	Like Peter Parker, you can do whatever a spider can.
The Bad:	Camera needs work.
And The Ugly:	Gooey bad guys after you use an entire cartridge of fluid to web them up.

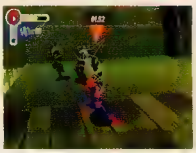
See the Fantastic Four's HQ in the background? Marvel Comics true believers can expect plenty of similar fan service...

...including cameos by Spidey villains Rhino, Venom and Scorpion (right). Even the Black Cat drops by to offer advice.

SPIDEY'S ARSENAL

Webtastic

Tapping the D-pad in different directions while squirting webbing lets you unleash variations of Spidey's sticky goo. He can weave a shield, launch a softball-size wad, build web spikes on his fists or yank enemies across the room.



With Tony Hawk's Pro Skater, developer Neversoft showed they could make a game that lets players do absolutely everything actual skaters get away with in real life. So you better believe Neversoft's Spider-Man game gives Spidey fans that same level of freedom. "Spider-Man can stick to anything in the comic books, so we'd be cheating players if we didn't let him do that in the game," Todd Jefferson, associate project leader at Activision, told us.

That's probably the first thing you'll notice when you put Peter Parker's alter ego though his paces in Spider-Man. Unlike Gex, who only adheres to specially marked surfaces in his adventures, Spider-Man can clamber everywhere in this game. He can stick to any wall, scale any building, even scurry along ceilings to sneak past enemies ("Bad guys never look up, from our experience," Jefferson said.).

Of course, Neversoft has reproduced every other Spidey skill, too. His super strength lets him lift furniture with ease and chuck it at enemies (one mission even has Spidey carrying around a one-ton bomb). Spider Sense is represented with arrows on screen that point in the direction of danger, while the Dual Shock rumbles a tactile warning. Our hero's webshooters do more than just squirt weblines for swinging around town. As long as your supply of goo holds out, you can have Spider-Man weave several types of handy web weapons (see sidebar). Or you can just kick, punch and toss bad guys with button combos that unleash Spider-Man's signature fighting style (the character's already coming to life with 270 animations, and more will be added).

Despite Spidey's many abilities, control is simple. He launches web lines automatically when he's swinging around town. Holding L1 puts you into a sniper mode, making it even easier to web up baddies from a distance or target a ledge you want to swing from. Tapping L1 centers the camera behind Spidey, although the view gets disorienting when you crawl from a horizontal ceiling to a vertical wall.

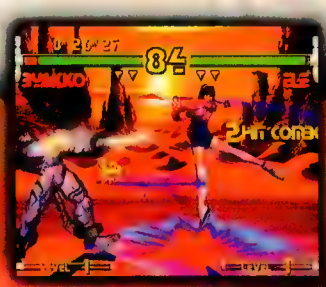
The game is made up of eight levels, which are broken into areas straight from the comic. Neversoft is using voice actors from *Spider-Man Unlimited* and other recent Spidey 'toons to make the characters as authentic as possible. Of course, Marvel Comics' vast resources are open to the team, as well. "We worked with Marvel very closely with this game," Jefferson said, "right down to Black Cat's costume and Scorpion's new armor. We got lots and lots of reference material." An N64 version of Spider-Man is also in the works (a separate developer will handle the port). Activision has no plans to release the game for the Dreamcast at this time.

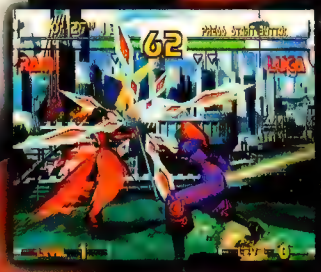
Spidey does more than brawl waves of thugs. Missions have him outrunning gunships or reaching goals within a certain amount of time.

CAPCOM EDGE

Slice. Dice. Chop. Skewer. All With One Amazing Tool!

In a war torn future, a new legion of agile warriors forms to unlock the new mysteries of Plasma Power and defeat the maniacal Dr. Bilstein and his army of terrorists. Enter Plasma Sword, the sequel to Capcom's critically acclaimed Star Gladiator. This futuristic 3-D fighter stars 22 surreal fighters with awe-inspiring moves, mind-bending combos and lightning fast gameplay. Plasma Sword – the all-in-one appliance that's a little slice of Heaven!





T Animated Violence

CAPCOM

Sega Dreamcast

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"Earth women are too fragile."

Michael Dorn (Star Trek's Commander Worf–featured prominently as a voice actor in Star Trek: Invasion) on his attitude to life and love.

Star Trek: Invasion

Publisher:	Activision
Developer:	Warthog
Players:	1-2
Genre:	Shooter
% Done:	60%
Release:	Summer 2000
Also On:	None
Web Address:	www.activision.com www.startrek.com

The Good: Gorgeous visuals and 3D engine from some of the people who brought us Colony Wars.

The Bad: It's only fighters... which you don't see in Star Trek.

And The Ugly: Ferengi dental work.

Even though you're only flying in a small fighter, you can get in close to the big capital ships and let rip with some brutal weaponry. The results of some well-placed hits can be quite spectacular.

Star Trek games have been noticeably absent from the current roster of consoles, but despite flagging ratings on *Voyager*, the franchise remains strong. Activision certainly hopes so...it has the rights to the license for a long time to come yet and is set to unleash the first of its console Trek games this summer in the shape of Invasion. If you think the screenshots look a lot like Colony Wars, you'd be spot-on. The development team, Warthog, is staffed by a large number of ex-Psygnosis team members who worked on CW. It shows throughout Invasion too...gorgeous lighting, crisp textures and clever particle effects make you think twice about whether this is really running on a PlayStation.

So what's it like? Well, oddly it's not what you'd expect from the Trek universe as it's unusually centered on dogfighting in very small fighter craft. The big capital ships are all present, but the focus is on swarms of ships fighting in some truly epic-looking battles. The story behind the game is also unique in that the team has been given the freedom to invent a whole new species—the Kam'Jahtae—an antagonist bunch who are trying to provoke war between the Federation, the Klingons, the Romulans and the Borg. As you progress you'll be faced with a variety of cool scenarios (to Trekkies anyway) including fighting a Borg Cube, taking on swarms of Kam'Jahtae ships and even pursuing renegade Federation starships. The story mode promises to be something very special, but the team has included an added bonus in the shape of a two-player dogfighting mode...something sadly lacking in other space combat games on the PlayStation.

WANTED

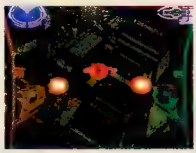
Cool Trek Crossovers

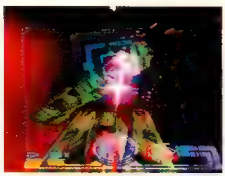
- **The Enterprise vs. a Star Destroyer**
- **Borg vs. Aliens**
- **Federation vs. The Empire**
- **Seven of Nine vs. Lara Croft**

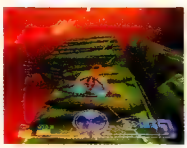
BIG BATTLES

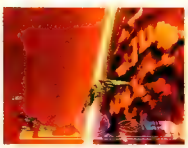
Size Really Does Matter

As with Colony Wars, Star Trek Invasion manages to convey a great impression of scale. Flying through a planet's upper atmosphere, or weaving about next to a huge capital ship looks extremely convincing.





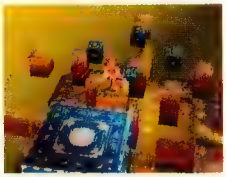


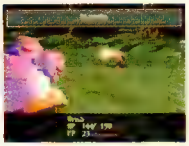


The game offers some considerable variety as you progress. You get to fly a plethora of different fighters, as well as man gun emplacements on much larger vessels. As with Colony Wars, missions also take you down to the surface of numerous planets, into the upper atmosphere as well as into deep space. There's plenty of shooting throughout...and it all looks spectacular.

Wild Arms 2: 2nd Ignition

Publisher: SCEA
Developer: Contrail
Players: 1
Genre: RPG
% Done: 70%
Release: May 2000
Also On: None
Web Address: www.playstation.com
The Good: Wild Arms 2 is an impressive mix of 3D and 2D art.
The Bad: The default walking speed is a bit too slow.
And The Ugly: Prolonged exposure to the in-game text may cause bleeding of the eyes.

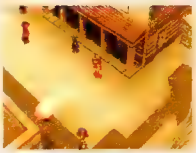
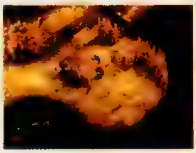




Left: The powerful ARM weapons return! Like in WA 1, each weapon can be upgraded for maximum efficiency.

EQUIPMENT

Tools of the Trade

The "Tools" feature of the original Wild Arms returns in the sequel. Among the various tools is a throwing knife for Ashley, a magic fire rod for Kilka, and a pair of kick boots for Brad. There are certain puzzles that can only be solved by tools (and some that require the combination of characters). For example, use Brad's kick boots to move explosives, and have Lilka blast it with her fire magic. Experiment!

Believe it or not, there was a time when the PlayStation didn't have many high-profile RPGs. During this time games like Tekken and Ridge Racer dominated the sales charts while games like Beyond the Beyond received little mainstream attention. Along came Contrail's Wild ARMS, a 2D RPG with 3D battle scenes, which, along with Konami's Suikoden, kick-started the RPG genre into high gear.

We return to the world of Filgaia, which has undergone some drastic changes since the first Wild ARMS. The main cast includes Lilka, a spunky 14-year-old sorceress-in-training; Ashley, a young musketeer from the Town of Meria; and Brad Evans, a rogue soldier formerly of the Liberation Army. In the first game, ARMs referred to the ancient weapons that characters possessed. In the sequel, these weapons are still called ARMs, but it also has a new meaning. The Agile Remote Mission Squad is the elite special team that is comprised of our three heroes, who are deployed throughout Filgaia to do freelance hero work (sound familiar?) as the story starts to unfold.

The core battle system remains virtually unchanged—combat is still turn-based, and all menus are the same. An important new addition is the ability to equip your character with a "Medium," which will increase certain stats and enable new abilities (very similar to FFVIII's Guardian Forces). The traditional magic points are replaced by "Force Points," which are accumulated by attacking (as well as being attacked). Lilka can learn various magic spells in a similar fashion as the original—different combinations of elemental crests yield different types of spells. Another new addition is the Personal Point system. By earning Personal Skill Points, you can grant your characters new abilities like Confusion Resistance and Increased Magic Attack.

As you can tell by the screenshots, Wild ARMS has made the leap to the third dimension, employing an isometric graphic engine (similar to Final Fantasy Tactics and Xenogears). It's been a long time in the making, but the excellent aesthetics look like it was time well spent, and shouldn't disappoint fans upon its release in early May.

PREVIEW

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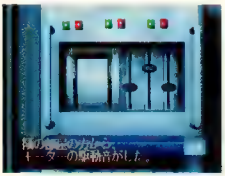
INSPIRATIONAL FILMS

Covert Ops: Nuclear Dawn is kind of like the movie *Air Force One*...except on a train. And it's the French ambassador held hostage, not the president.

Covert Ops: Nuclear Dawn

Publisher: Activision
Developer: Sugar & Rockets
Players: 1
Genre: Action
% Done: 65%
Release: June 2000
Also On: None
Web Address: www.activision.com
The Good: The fast-paced intro with guns, bullets and explosions.
The Bad: It's kind of like Syphon Filter, and kind of like RE. Lets hope it holds its own.
And The Ugly: Nuclear bombs exploding in highly populates areas.



Both simple and complex Resident Evil-inspired puzzles await you in the game's 15+ train-car levels.

The game's more action-oriented than the survival horror games–though not as action-packed as Syphon Filter or MGS.

You're one of the few good guys left on a train carrying enough nuclear bombage to destroy a city—and it's speeding toward European hot spots like Paris and Berlin. Worse yet, the French Ambassador and his family are being held hostage by Russian terrorists. Your job is to disarm the nukes, stop the train, save the Ambassador and take out a bunch of bad guys in the process. Piece of cake, right?

Covert Ops: Nuclear Dawn (known as Chase the Express in Japan) plays like Resident Evil, with a lot more of an action-packed *Air Force One*-sort of style. There are bad-ass special ops enemies who wear night-vision goggles and carry AK-47s in almost every train car, attack copters flying around above, and various weapons and items to pick up (the selection screens are remarkably like RE's actually).

The game is split up into 15 different areas—usually broken up into different train cars. Each car poses its own obstacles, whether it houses a group of terrorists, puzzles or other such things. Some cars have more than one level to work through. There are also four boss characters scattered throughout the game's levels.

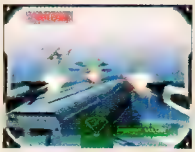
Like RE, CO:ND is filled with various puzzles you must complete to advance. Some are as simple as finding a code in one area of the game and using it in another, while others include figuring out a series of toggle switches. Unlike RE, CO:ND offers various mini-games to break up the action.

One of the most winning features so far is the game's non-linearity. Different tasks you choose to complete affect a situation later on. For instance, at one point you can opt to give a wounded ally your vest. If you do, he lives, and comes to your aid later. If you don't, he dies, and you have to take on the situation on your own. This branching-type story line allows for multiple endings. CO:ND also has various secret characters you can unlock depending on what ending you receive. These characters do not have their own special endings though.

CO:ND is developed by Sugar & Rockets, one of Sony of Japan's internal development teams. They're best know for the Jumping Flash games.

GAMEPLAY BITS

Renaissance Action-Man



You'll not only sneak around train car after train car killing all types of bad guys, you'll defuse bombs, man a couple of vulcan canons to take out enemy helicopters overhead, and even get behind the controls of the train, among other things. All of these mini-game/puzzle-type situations are integrated into the gameplay for a seemless experience. Of course, this stuff makes Covert Ops: Nuclear Dawn seem even more like an action movie. Now if Activision could only employ the talents of Harrison Ford for the voice-over stuff, they'd have a regular Air Force One: The Game on their hands...no, that's not a good idea.

front mission 3™

A HEAVY-DUTY STRATEGY EXPERIENCE

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Animated Violence

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PlayStation®

PREVIEW

"I am the man who will cut off your nose."
-Rikimaru, Tenchu 2

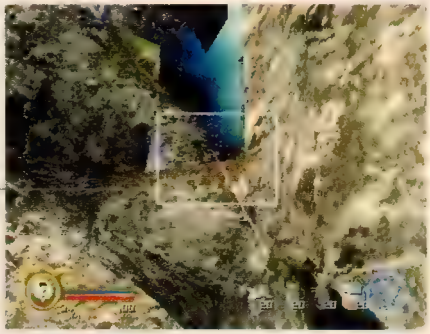
Tenchu 2: Birth of the Assassins

Publisher:	Activision
Developer:	Acquire
Players:	1-2
Genre:	Action
% Done:	60%
Release:	June 2000
Also On:	None
Web Address:	www.activision.com

The Good: There's so much more to do in Tenchu 2, and plenty more weapons and skills to use.

The Bad: An enemy sees you, and you become the hunted.

And The Ugly: Some of the enemies in this game. Definitely subscribers to Ugly Mug Monthly.



Grappling has been refined in Tenchu 2. You have to land the grappling hook at edges of cliffs, such as the one shown here to rocket yourself to areas seemingly unreachable otherwise.

It's rare when we get a game here in the U.S. that was developed in Japan that's not planned for release over there. But that is the case with Tenchu 2: Birth of the Assassins, the prequel to Tenchu, developed by Acquire in Japan for Activision.

A coup in the House of Gohda four years before the events of the first game sets freshman ninjas Rikimaru and Ayame on a quest to avenge the betrayal of their master—Lord Gohda. There are over 20 missions, split between Ayame and Rikimaru, that take place during the night, dusk and day (in addition to two training levels). Once you beat the game, a new character will become playable. Of course we can't reveal the identity of the third character, or else we'd have to kill you (OK, you got us...Activision wouldn't tell us, either).

Objectives include protecting a princess from would-be assassins, guarding a palace, stealing specific objects, tracking enemies, assassination, and stopping an enemy invasion—among others. There'll be plenty more stealth kills, too—6-7 per character. Once you've sliced and diced an enemy, you can search his/her body for items, too. And you'll have to drag the carcasses out of the way so as not to alert other enemies of your presence. Aside from running, jumping and sneaking around, you'll also have to swim past some enemies to gain access to their stronghold. There's the usual amount of bosses, and some characters will even be as powerful as your character (tougher to beat).

New weapons and items can be found along the way, including the usual array of swords and knives, a blow gun, an improved grappling hook, exploding arrows, blinding dust, grenades and the ultra-cool magic vanishing tree. You can be invisible to enemies for up to 20 seconds with it (and looks super-cool). There's also an item which transports you right behind the nearest enemy.

Gameplay is much the same as the first Tenchu with more refinements and a lot more missions. The big additions are the two-player mode and the Mission Editor (see sidebar), a more robust version of the editor that was included in the Japanese rerelease of Tenchu.

LEVEL MAKIN'

Office Ninja

Activision has included a mission editor in Tenchu 2, where you can create your own missions from scratch, as big and complex as any in the regular game. You can use any of the obstacles, buildings, and characters (you assign their AI actions) from the game. There's even a map in the editor called, "Office." Office ninjas, prepare to attack! Activision hopes to post player-created missions to its web site and release discs with the best missions.

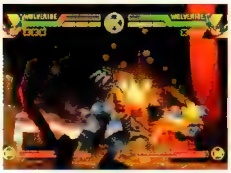
VIDEOGAMES.COM ONLINE POLL

Which of the following is your most anticipated Marvel comics-based game?

X-Men: Mutant Academy (PS, N64)	637
Spider-Man (PS, N64)	1833
Marvel vs. Capcom 2 (Arcade, DC)	1908

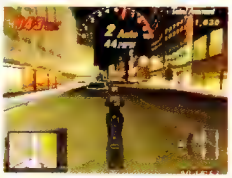
X-Men: Mutant Academy

Now that **Paradox** has taken over development duties on X-Men, this 3D fighter is looking much better than it did at past E3's. Mutant Academy features 10 fighters from the comic series, including Mystique, Sabretooth, Beast and Phoenix. You'll get super combos, aerial combat, special powers and even the new, sexy leather costumes from the upcoming flick. **Activision** will bring this one out in **June**.



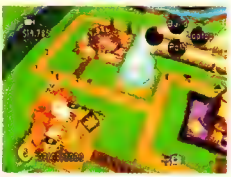
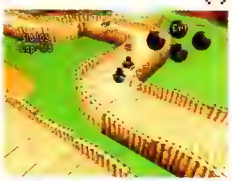
Runabout 2

Runabout 2 is the sequel to Felony 11-79, the amusing yet far too abbreviated thriller from a few years back. To ensure depth, Runabout 2 features 13 missions in five regions. Some of them require vehicle swaps as well as bomb planting and other sneaky stuff. You can run over everything in your path except people. Thankfully they can hop really fast. **Hot-B** will release Runabout 2 this **April.**

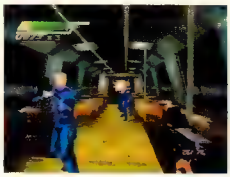


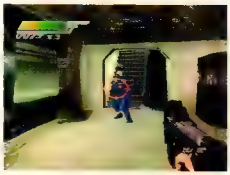
SimTheme Park

In **Bullfrog's** newest god-game, SimTheme Park, players build their own amusement parks in 3D with one of four different themes. Create rides and attractions, hire staff, keep the visitors happy, and most importantly, make money. You even get to ride the rides and play the games within your park in a cool first-person mode. Ride 'til you puke this **March** when **EA** releases SimTheme Park.

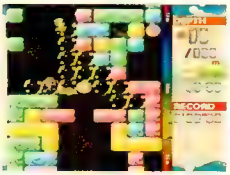
The World Is Not Enough

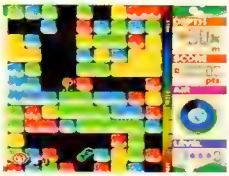


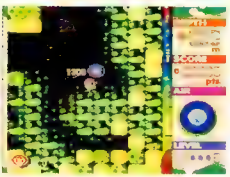


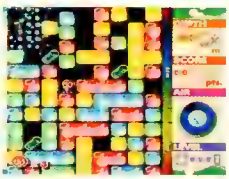
Disappointed with Tomorrow Never Dies? Upset that it wasn't GoldenEye 007 for the PlayStation? Maybe The World Is Not Enough will be something more exciting. **Electronic Arts** now has the exclusive rights to the James Bond franchise and will be bringing out the latest installment (based on the most recent movie) before the end of the year. Look for 3D action/adventure and cool multiplayer features. The PS2 version is based on the Quake III engine, but we hear that the PlayStation game will boast the next best thing...a 3D graphics engine that produces visuals even better than those seen in EA/Dreamworks' Medal of Honor. If you want to check on the development of the game, go to http://007.ea.com.

Mr. Driller



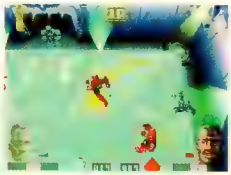


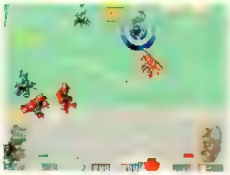


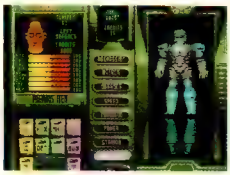


Reminiscent of Dig Dug and Super Puzzle Fighter 2, Mr. Driller combines Japanese quirkiness with block-falling puzzle action. Players dig down through layers of colored blocks causing them to fall, creating chain combos. Beware of cave-ins and remember to collect enough air canisters or you'll die a horribly cute death. Look for **Namco** to release Mr. Driller in **May**, you dig?

Speedball 2100

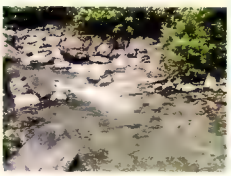






Old-schoolers may remember Speedball from back in the Sega Genesis days. Well, this PS offering isn't much different, aside from 3D graphics and a few fancy effects. It's still developed by the **Bitmap Brothers**, it still has simple yet effective control (one button and the D-pad basically) and you still have an array of tough-looking mugs to pick for your team. Think of soccer mixed with football, with a healthy dose of violence (or should we say hockey) thrown in. Look for it from **Empire** in **July**.

Reel Fishing II



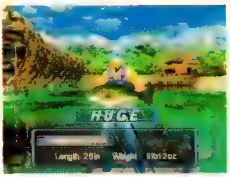
Reel Fishing II takes a different path than recent arcade offerings like Big Ol' Bass and Bass Rise. The emphasis is on serene, realistic fishing rather than a frantic reel-them-in-as-fast-as-you-can experience. Picturesque FMV layered with polygon fish provides the action in several real-life lakes and streams. Hidden stages, 50 types of fish, and over 500 different tackle are featured. It's as close to the real thing as you can get. Look for this **Natsume** title in **May**.

F1 2000

It was inevitable EA would snag an F1 license. How could they neglect an international sport like Formula One racing? Every event from the 2000 season plus all the real teams, cars and drivers are featured (including the new course at Indy). The philosophy behind F1 2000 is basic, "keep the driving gameplay simple and easy to learn, but still offer a load of depth for F1 purists." Sounds like a good plan to us...**Electronic Arts** will release this **Visual Sciences** title come **spring 2000**.

Championship Bass

"That's a giant Bass!" You'll exclaim, when you play EA's newest arcade fishing game. Several modes of play from edge-of-your-sit arcade fishing, to serene pleasure angling are possible. Fish AI is trickier than ever with many more responses than the usual sniff and bite response. They'll tease you until you figure out how to catch 'em. **EA** has slated Championship Bass for a **spring 2000** release.

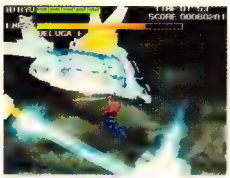
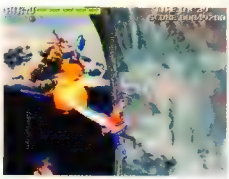
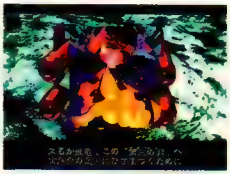


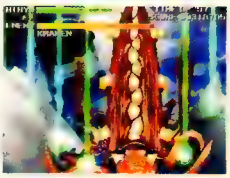
DID YOU KNOW?

Strider is a book by children's author Beverly Cleary. It's about the friendship between Leigh Botts and his dog Strider, who provides him with love and affection after Leigh's parents divorce. A real tear-jerker, this one.

Strider 1 & 2

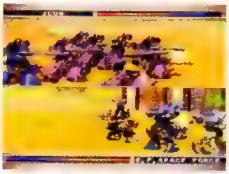
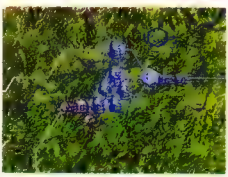
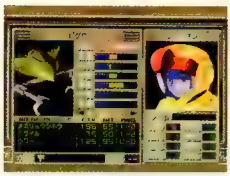
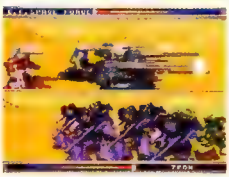
We know for a fact that the original Strider ranks among many gamers as one of their all-time favorite arcade titles. While the subsequent Genesis and PC Engine ports were decent (for the time), we were never treated to an enthusiast 100% conversion...until now that is. The news gets even better. **Capcom** has recently announced they will bringing this Strider package stateside, intact with both Strider 1 and 2! For those of you who haven't had the chance to get hands-on with Strider 2 in the arcade, it's a 2D/3D hybrid with new twists on Strider's gameplay. The "upgrade" experience is comparable to R-Type Delta, where many of the stages are beefed-up 3D versions of the original. The only nitpick we have with Strider 1 is that you have to put up with load times. Strider 1 & 2 is out **now** in Japan.



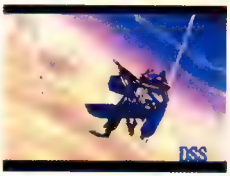
Kidou Senshi Gundam: Ghiren no Yabou

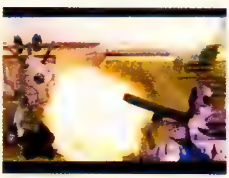
Bandai has rereleased their popular Saturn strategy game, Ghiren's Greed, for the PlayStation. It defies western comprehension, but Ghiren's Greed has already topped the charts in its first week of release in Japan. Ghiren's Greed follows the events of the legendary One Year War, as players control both Zion and Federation forces. Import this Saturn classic **now**!

Macross Plus

The large majority of Macross freaks out there are still waiting for that definitive Macross game. For us, Omega Boost best simulated that Max versus Millia 3D dogfight. For the third Macross game on the PS, **Takara** has added Zentraedi battle pods, as well as the option to pilot your very own Destroid (Tomahawk, Defender or Phalanx anyone?). While it all sounds very promising, and these screenshots certainly look solid enough, we'll wait and see about the gameplay. MP is set for release this **spring**.





BETRAYAL
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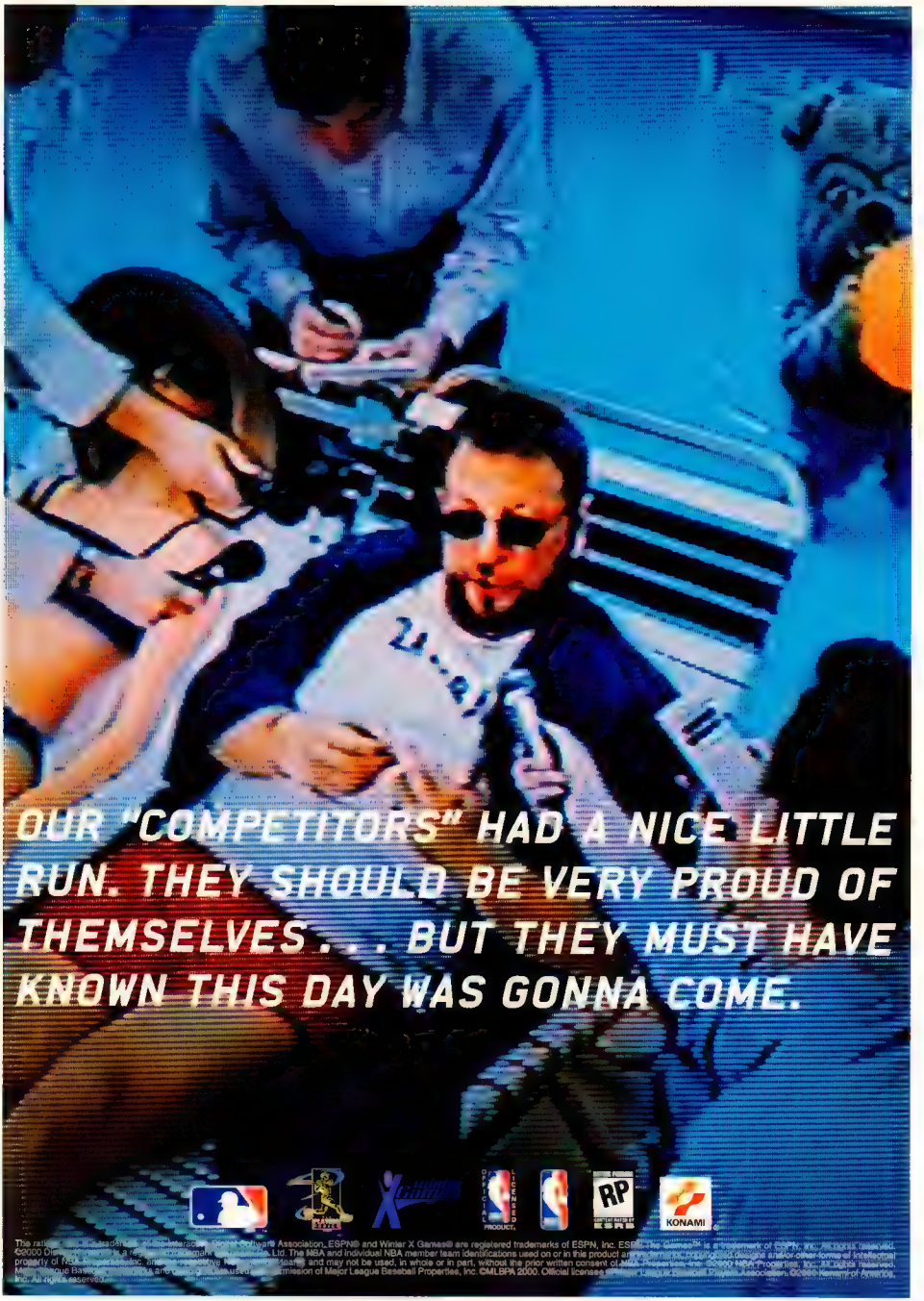
SMACK! DOWN
THEY DON'T FORGIVE.
AND THEY DON'T FORGET.
Lay the SmackDown on your enemies with your own oversized jabroni or as one of the WF's top Superstars. Make friends then break them as you roam backstage from the boiler room to the kitchen. Just remember that backstage politics can work against you – don't let The Rock™ run-ins, well-placed metal chairs, and McMahon appointed guest referees get you in the end.
PlayStation
THQ


OUR "COMPETITORS" HAD A NICE LITTLE RUN. THEY SHOULD BE VERY PROUD OF THEMSELVES . . . BUT THEY MUST HAVE KNOWN THIS DAY WAS GONNA COME.

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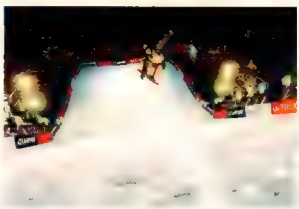

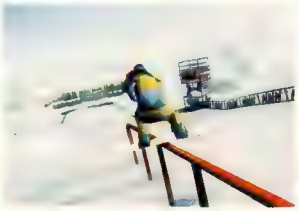

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All males are dead.
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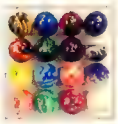
Animated Blood and Gore
Strong Sexual Context

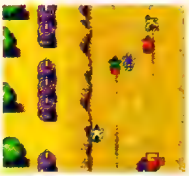


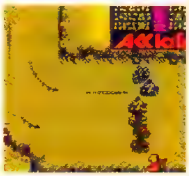
PSYCHEDELIC BALLS

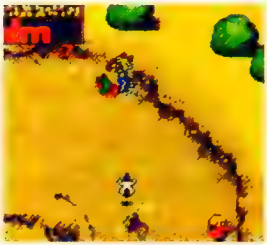
If you like your pool on the wild side, check out these crazy-looking balls at recroom.com or http://jimcds.viamall.com/jimcds/noname11.html

Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000

For a GBC racing game, Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000 is about as fast as they come. You have 16 tracks to choose from in Season or Arcade Mode. Bikes range from 80cc up to 250cc. The terrain is mostly flat but is peppered with small jumps and ruts. **Acclaim** will release this single-player game in **March**.







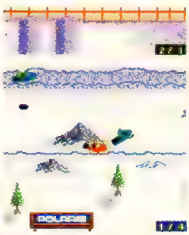
Wacky Races

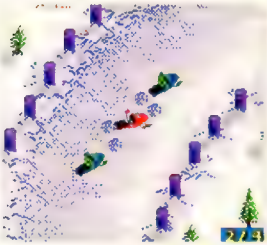
The baby version of Wacky Races (see the preview of the Dreamcast version last issue) stars Muttley along with seven of his closest friends and enemies. They all have special vehicles with unique characteristics (for example, the Boulder Brothers have a tougher car that's harder to knock off the track). You can race on nine tracks in a variety of environments.

This one-player cart is due out in **June**, from **Infogrames**.

Polaris SnoCross 2000

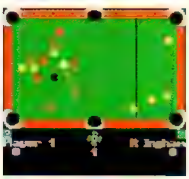
Power-sliding, jumps and long slopes permeate this **Vatical** racing sim. Gameplay is similar to Supercross 2000 only a bit slower. For variety, there are 10 courses of different difficulties. You can hop your sled up with better parts and modifications as well. For a real game-blast, you can go head to head with a friend. Look for SnoCross this **March.**

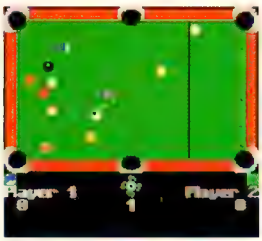




Pro Pool

It's essential for all pool games to have accurate and true-to-life physics. Without them, gameplay is shot to heck. So basically no matter what we say here doesn't mean @#$% until we get a playable. In the meantime, here are the stats on this **April** release, **Codemasters** title: normal and hexagon tables, top, side and backspin, 64 AI opponents, 3, 6, 9 and 8 ball sets plus an auto-save feature.

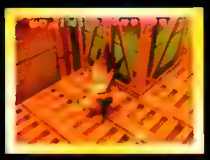




He's still the bomb!

NINTENDO 64

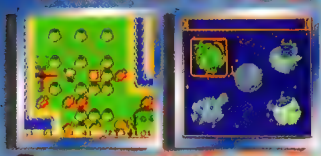
BOMBERMAN 64
The Second Attack!



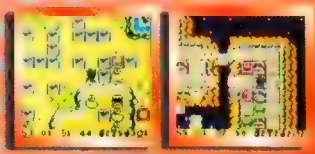
- Bigger Better Bombs!
- Five Battle Modes
- Four Player Split Screen Capability

GAME BOY COLOR

BOMBERMAN MAX BLUE



BOMBERMAN MAX RED



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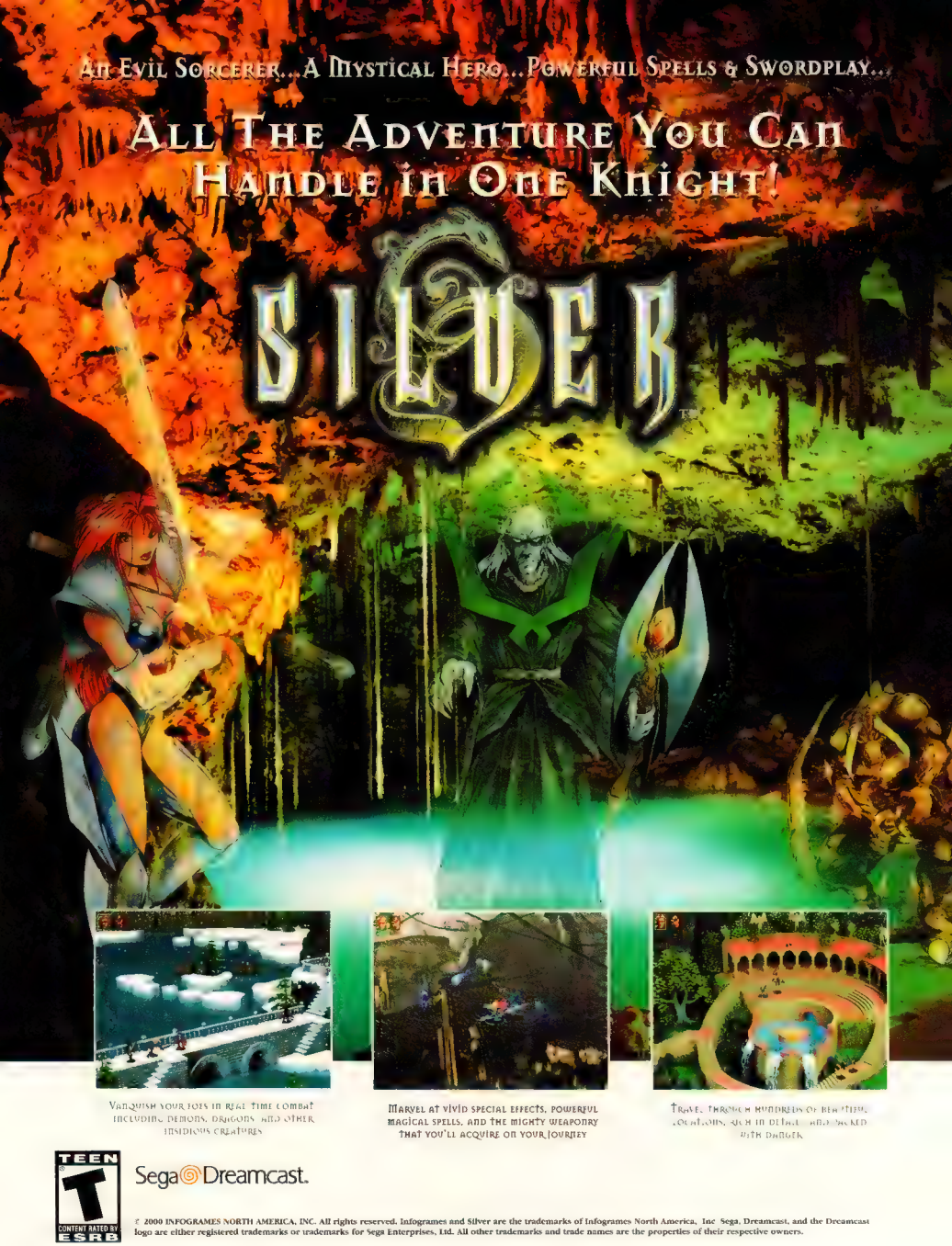
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Travel through hundreds of beautiful locations, rich in detail and packed with danger
TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Sega Dreamcast.
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spiral house

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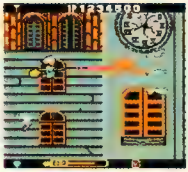
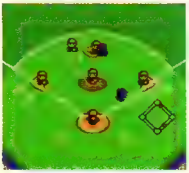
Cotton

While fighting games seem to rule SNK's color portable, it is getting more variety as the months go on. Developed by **Success**, the game follows a little witch named Cotton as she hops on her broom to vanquish evil. The game combines classic shooter gameplay with a rather cute-yet-Japanese premise. This is an adaptation of the original arcade game, which has been released for PC Engine and PlayStation. Cotton will be out in **March** in Japan.



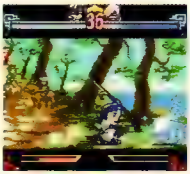
Dynamite Slugger

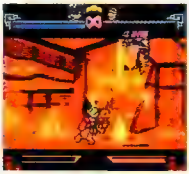
We had a chance to play Dynamite Slugger a few months back when **SNK** came to visit. While we didn't expect much from this lil' thing, it turns out the pitching/batting interface is not bad at all. Most notably, as the batter, it's easy to see the ball as it flies toward you. Connecting with it is aptly intuitive as well. Sounds trivial, but that's half the battle with small-screen baseball sims. To the developer's credit, the graphics in general are sharp and clear. Other gameplay features impressed us as well. Player control is responsive and accurate, not to mention speedy. The digital stick works well enough, although analog would be better. No Major League Baseball license however, just 28 international teams. Guide your boys through a 160-game season or go straight to the playoffs. Exhibition and Tournament are also available. Two-player link and a save option round out the list of features for this **May** release title.



The Last Blade: Beyond the Destiny

SNK continues to make good on their promise to support the NGPC with quality gaming. But why so many fighting games for a handheld system? Last Blade follows closely to its arcade counterpart, but like other NGPC fighters, is filtered through super-deformed character designs. There will be a total of 14 fighters, three mini-games, and two entirely different story modes for you to explore. Another cool feature is the "scroll" bartering system. By playing mini-games and beating the story mode with each of the characters, you earn scrolls which you can use to unlock secret characters, gallery pictures and other mini-games. In two-player versus, you can battle for scrolls and set wagers. The Last Blade is set for release late **April**.





Cool Boarders

UEP Systems brings its 3D PlayStation snowboarding game (the past few of which have been developed by 989 Studios) to the small screen in this version for the NGPC. **Available now** in Japan, it features 20 different courses, all raced from the 3/4 perspective (like Zaxxon, only going the other way). There's two modes of play—free ride and survival. And there are plenty of obstacles to get in your way, like pits, polar bears, trees and rocks.

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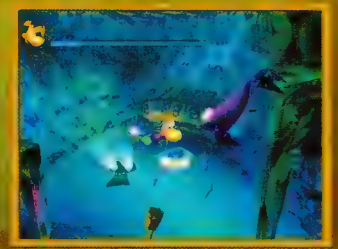

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- 10 New Arenas
- Use ALL Your Old Armored Core Creations
- 2-Player Combat with Split-Screen & Link Cable Play
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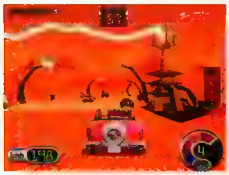
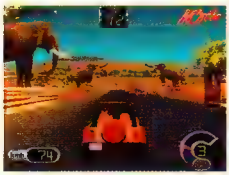
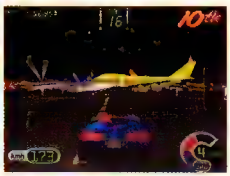
Cruis'n Exotica

Midway's Cruis'n Exotica has all the markings of previous Cruis'n racers, including long tracks with plenty of shortcuts, pseudo real-car models, and a slower, more deliberate game pace (as opposed to games like SF Rush). Exotica features 10 tracks that range anywhere from Las Vegas to Mars. From what we've seen, much of the scenery is quite fantastic, if not a little bizarre. Exotica will flood your local watering hole (and possibly every pool hall across the nation) this **spring**.







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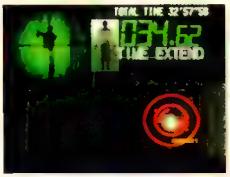
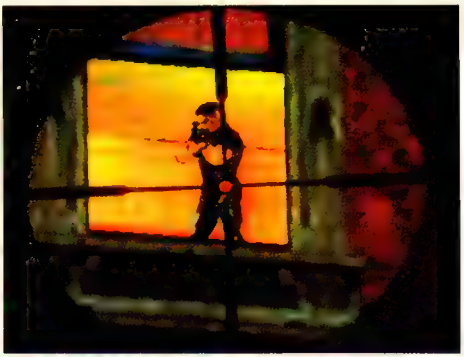
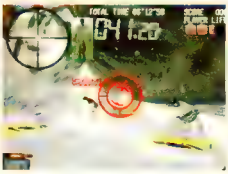
Dark Silhouette: Silent Scope 2

Dark Silhouette is **Konami's** follow-up to their gimmicky sniper game with a realistic built-in scope. This time around, terrorists have taken over an abandoned chemical plant, and it's up to you (and a buddy via linked cabinets) to blow their brains out. Locales include downtown London, snowy mountains, castles, forests and a military airport. There's a gallery challenge, and even a versus mode! DS: SS2 is out this **spring**.

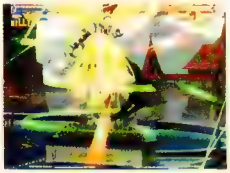






Guilty Gear X

The first Guilty Gear was a spastically beautiful little fighter on the PlayStation. It garnered critical praise for its 2D-intensive graphics, and established a cult following of fans. For a proper sequel, **Atlus** has turned to Sega's ubiquitous Naomi arcade hardware to host Guilty Gear X. Expect more of the same visual chaos, except with tons more frames of animation, and of course a perfect DC port by summer.



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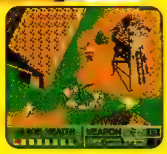
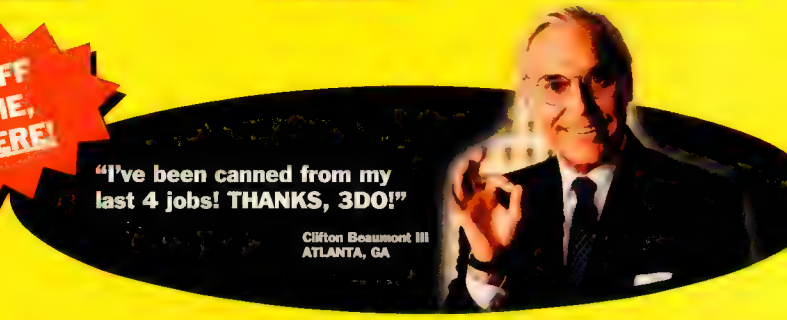


GOOF-OFF ANYTIME, ANYWHERE!



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How can Activision and Neversoft make Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 even more addicting than the original? Easy. They're [illegible] the pros—[illegible]

By Crispin Boyer
Illustrations by Allan Ditzig

The guys at Neversoft have ticked off their downstairs neighbors again. Employees at the accounting [illegible] floor of the game developer's two-story mirrored-window office building are griping about the pounding sounds reverberating across their ceiling. To the accountants, it sounds like the Neversoft gang upstairs must be dropping [illegible] pound barbells on the floor.

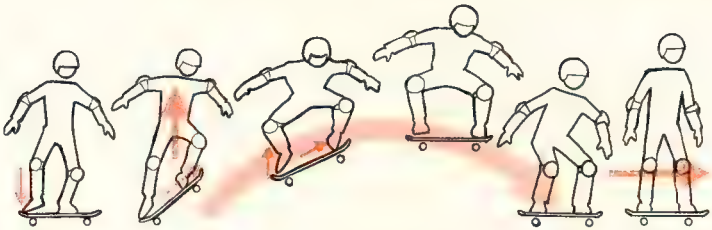
Close. [illegible] off a conference-room [illegible] executing [illegible] the carpet.

The sound can [illegible] pro skater [illegible] boarding game [illegible] photographer. After he's scuffed Neversoft's table and pounded the floor to submission with his street-skater stylings, Thomas sits before an early build of the PlayStation version—which Activision will publish in late August—and fires off questions about the sequel.

"Will the riders' special grinds be the [illegible]

"No, we'll do whatever you guys want," [illegible] Neversoft [illegible]

"Hey, I got [illegible] Thomas adds, [illegible] worry, it's covered [illegible]



The Ollie

1. **Grab your deck and find a flat patch of blacktop—preferably not the middle of a busy street or interstate—and hop aboard.**
2. **Kick a few times to build momentum until you're rolling along at a decent clip.**
3. **Rest your front foot at the board's halfway point, while placing the ball of your other foot on the tail. Now bend your knees.**
4. **Do all the following in one explosive movement: Forcefully press the back of the board against the ground and jump while sliding your front leg up toward the front of the board. Do it all right and your deck should leave the ground at an angle, which will level out as you slide your front foot forward—a motion that pulls the rear of the board free of the concrete.**
5. **Bend you knees again at your ollie's peak and stay centered over your deck. Keep your shoulders lined up with the board, too.**
6. **Make sure your knees are bent when you touch down. Your front foot should rest on the forward truck bolts. Keep your rear foot right near the start of the tail.**

Muska shows up for his hands-on playtime.

It's the same collaborative process that made the original Tony Hawk's Pro Skater such an addicting, appealing and—with nearly 1 million copies sold in the U.S.—successful PlayStation title. The starring pro skaters lend more than their appearances and custom boards to the sequel; they play it, help tweak it, and above all, immerse the developers in skate culture. It all makes for a game with serious street cred, mainly because the pro skaters are often brutally honest about what needs fixing.

"It's a fun process," Pease says, nodding at Thomas, "even when he comes in here and rips on us."

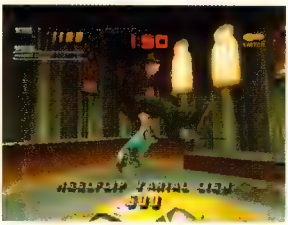
"I'm your worst nightmare," Thomas agrees, "and you actually let me in the door to tell you what's wrong with the game."

For the sequel—which is also due to hit the Dreamcast, N64, Game Boy Color and PC—Neversoft has access to feedback from more than just the game's cadre of pro skaters. The bulletin board on their Web site (www.neversoft.com) is crammed with at least 25,000 messages from addicts of the original game. These fans know what they want in the sequel, and they're not shy about posting their demands on Neversoft's board. At the top of their list: a skate-park editor and a create-a-skater feature.

Neversoft listened. THPS2 will pack the most in-depth level editor ever seen in a PlayStation game (see sidebar). And the custom-skater option is just as ambitious. Aside from tailoring every head-to-toe feature of your characters (including their skin tones, tattoos, clothing styles—even types of tube socks), you can customize their trick sets and tweak category upon subcategory of stats. You'll create a vert or street skater, then take him through the Career Mode and build his abilities to superhuman levels, better than any of the pro skaters who come with the game. Oh, and if you don't have a DexDrive yet, you'll definitely want one for THPS2. "The goal obviously is when people start trading these parks and skaters on the Internet," Neversoft game designer Chris Rausch tells us. "You'll get a completely different experience every time you play somebody else's guy or park, creating basically an endless roster of characters and levels."

Too lazy to create your own in-game doppelganger? No problem: THPS2 still packs the 10 pros of the original game. And three new skaters have come along for the ride. You now get Scott Caballero, Eric Koston and Rodney Mullen—the one guy gamers demanded most of all, the father of modern street skating.

Fans of the first game have one other



The new custom-skater feature is so in-depth you can essentially build yourself and compete with the pros. Or you could just go with "white afro" guy.

common demand of the sequel: They want to see more skate spots ripped from real-life. They want more locations like Burnside, the original game's most realistic level. So when it came time to design THPS2's 10 levels, the developers did their homework. "The team pretty much sits at this conference table every day for lunch and repeatedly watches every skate video that's ever been made," Neversoft president Joel Jewett tells us. Team members embarked on field trips to the top skate spots in the world. They snapped pictures. They recorded hundreds of hours of video. They even tapped Thomas, who's made several professional skate videos in his free time. "They sent me a list of all the spots they needed," Thomas says, "and I brougnt all my videos in, and I even brought in my raw footage, too, so they could see everything that's going on at those spots."

Their field work paid off. Neversoft has duplicated several real-world locales, including parks in Marseille, France; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; and the infamous Skate Street, located in Ventura, Calif. Heck, Skate Street is accurate right down to its wall murals, soda machines and T-Shirt racks in its gift shop. "To have it totally grounded in reality is a blast," Jewett says. "If you've actually been to one of these spots, you're like, 'Yeah! Check this out! I can do stuff here that'd kill me if I tried it in real life.'"

The team sifted through all the fans' feedback, put together a list of most-requested real-life spots, then built them in the game. Take the new school level, for instance, which is actually a combination of several southern California high school campuses made famous in skate videos. It's here you'll find the Leap of Faith, a two-story ollie drop Jamie Thomas once attempted in real life, only to bust his board on landing. In the New York level, you'll skate an exact

photo by Voldi Tanner

Hawk Tawk

An interview with pro skaters Tony Hawk and Jamie Thomas

Tony Hawk may be the world's most talented vert skateboarder. He may be the only man in history to pull off the once-fabled 900. He may have dominated dozens of competitions, starred in as many commercials and even done the motion-capture for Disney's Tarzan.

But he's still a down-to-earth guy, and he's still gotta eat. So we chomped down Mexican food with the 31-year-old skate veteran, who's also a father of two, along with fellow pro skater Jamie Thomas. The duo told us everything we did and maybe didn't want to know about the new game, getting hurt, the merits of K-Mart skateboards and exactly what pro skaters do in a typical day.

EGM: How deep was your involvement with the original game and its sequel?

Tony Hawk: We just figure out what we think should stay or go or be improved or what feels more realistic and more fun. For the most part, it's just playing it and figuring out what's possible and what people are gonna like. I mean, I play it with my son, who plays all the time. So he tells me what he thinks, too. He's brutally honest.

EGM: Who's better at Pro Skater, you or your son?

TH: Oh, I don't know. I think he has more time to play it these days. I used to think it was just me, but he's gotten a lot better.

EGM: Why do you think the original appealed to so many people, not just skaters?

Jamie Thomas: It has so much variety and so many possibilities. If you watch anybody play, they've all got their own style and they all do their own runs and their own things. I mean, sure it has the story part of the game and you're supposed to get so many tapes or do this or that, but for the most part you can just get creative, just like real skateboarding. For the people who have never gotten into skateboarding—they're not physically able or whatever—it's a way they can live the thing that has drawn all the skateboarders to skateboarding, the freedom to do whatever you want when you want. Now you have that in a video game,

so everybody gets to experience it without going through the bad things about skating, which is getting kicked out, getting hurt, dealing with all the hassles. Now you have hassle-free, freedom of expression on your TV.

TH: Yeah, but I think also it's a totally new way of playing games. There really hasn't been any game

like it, even in other sports. In other skate games, you didn't really have full control over what you're doing. It's more like you punch in a combo then you watch the guy.

TH: Also, Neversoft totally immersed themselves in the skate culture. That's pretty rare as far as getting so deep into it.

EGM: Did other companies approach you to make a skateboarding before Activision and Neversoft?

TH: Yeah, right at the same time a couple different companies did. I just kinda figured out who was on the right track.

EGM: Why Neversoft then?

TH: Actually [they] showed me a sample of what they already had, and I could tell they were on the right track. They just had a super-early guy who would ollie and do a couple tricks, but it felt right, and everyone else was scrambling to figure out what skateboarding was all about. I didn't want to go through that. To try to teach them from ground zero would just take too long, and too much compromise.

EGM: What games are you guys into at home?

TH: I have all the systems. I play a lot of the N64 games, stuff like Banjo, Super Mario, Mario Kart, and then I'm into Crash Bandicoot on the PlayStation, but anything that's, like, super role-playing or involved, I just don't have the time.

JT: Yeah, yeah, my wife bought me Zelda a Christmas ago, and I knew as soon as I unlocked the wrapper that it was gonna take my life away for about two weeks, so I never even

replica of the Brooklyn Banks, the most recognizable deck mecca on the East Coast. "The reason these spots made it into the game is because they're plastered all over the skate videos," Pease says. "So a player can take a run through this school, then watch the replay and get replay angles similar to what he just saw in the video and absolutely recognize what he's doing—and all this with his create-a-skater character who looks just like him."

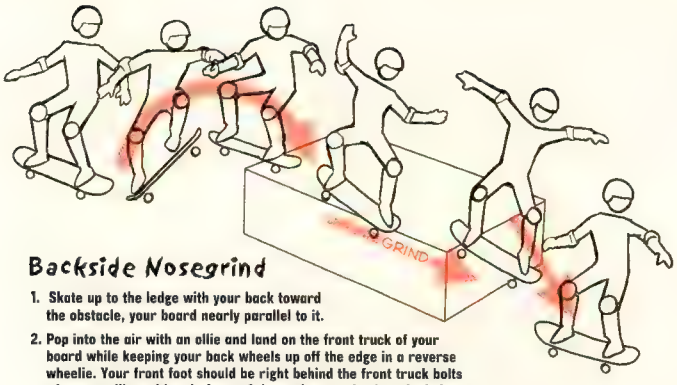
Of course, the sequel won't restrict you to real-world stuff. Within the levels, you'll still find plenty of fantasy elements, obstacles like stacked picnic tables, loads of banks, rooftops and hundreds of things to grind. "We're gonna put in a lot more stair sets and kinked rails, as well," Rausch adds. "Not just run-of-the-mill straight rails everywhere."

Like the first game, THPS2 packs both small competition arenas and sprawling city levels. But the objectives in Career Mode are different this time. Instead of completing goals to nab skate tapes, you now track down and collect money icons scattered through each level. Collecting money lets you "buy" upgrades to your skater's stats, as well as purchase new decks and access later levels. "Going over to a cash-based system gives us the chance to put extra cash hidden all over the level and in hard-to-reach places," Pease tells us. "It will be really hard to clean out the levels totally."

But scooping up cash won't be your only objective in each stage. While the first game's Career Mode only gave you five goals per level, the sequel packs many, many

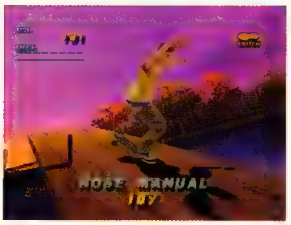
photo by Volo Tanner

Neversoft's THPS2 team, from left to right: Joel Jewett, Noel Hines, Ralph D'Amato, Jason Keeney, Gary Jesdanun (lower), Darren Thorne (above Gary), Junki Saita, Ryan McMahon, Jason Uyeda, Johnny Ow, Mick West, Chris Rausch (throwing a sign), Scott Pease, Silvio Porretta, Jamie Thomas, Chad Muska's hand. Not pictured is designer Aaron Cammarata, who works in New York and helped nail the look of the Central Park level.



Backside Nosegrind

1. Skate up to the ledge with your back toward the obstacle, your board nearly parallel to it.
2. Pop into the air with an ollie and land on the front truck of your board while keeping your back wheels up off the edge in a reverse wheelie. Your front foot should be right behind the front truck bolts when you ollie and just in front of them when you land on the ledge.
3. Grind for a bit, then push down a bit on the nose of your board and pop off the edge.



more. You still need to collect letters to spell "SKATE," and you'll come across obstacle-specific objectives (such as ollie 10 garbage cans, grind eight benches, etc.). Just expect more of them. In New York, for instance, you'll need to nab tokens to gain access to the subway system and its grindable rails.

Many obstacles will also be highly interactive this time around. In the school, for example, you'll find a streetlight you can actually topple over if you ram it from the right angle. Then, once it has fallen, you can grind along it and hop to another rail for big combos points. In another level, you can knock over a basketball net if you grind its backboard. The fallen post explodes into cash icons. You won't be able to complete some level objectives unless you find these scattered interactive obstacles. "What we want to do this time is constantly have the player find new things they might not have seen before," Rausch said. "Levels will be full of these things—as much as we can cram in. Our only limitation is memory."

Speaking of which, Neversoft has devised a more efficient way of storing animations. That means the team can cram dozens of new tricks into the sequel. "A lot of the special moves from the last game reappear as just regular moves," Pease says, "and we have a lot of new special moves on top of that. Each skater's moves will be more differentiated, too." THPS2 packs new grinds, including Hurricanes, Salad grinds and frontside and backside Bluntslides. And while the original THPS only had one handp.ant, the sequel will have many. New

opened the wrapper. And one time I got into Super Mario by accident. My wife rented it, and I couldn't return it for nine days until I beat it. And when I beat it I said I don't want to play this ever again. Get it away from me. But with Tony Hawk's Pro Skater, you can pick it up and play for 10 minutes then leave. Although usually it doesn't work that way. Usually it's an hour at least.

TH: I would love to play a game like Final Fantasy, but I know that I couldn't even start. It would take too long. It's the same thing with learning HTML. I always wanted to learn it, but I know as soon as I started, I wouldn't want to stop, so I just let other people do it because they put in the time.

EGM: Tony, what's your status now? Didn't you just retire from skating?

TH: I'm just not competing, so I'm just doing lots of exhibitions and tours, like at the X-Games I'll be doing commentary, so I'll still be there. A lot of the pro skaters, some of the big names, Jamie included, don't really compete, so you don't really have to compete to be considered one of the top pros. You just gotta perform, you know, get coverage, video footage, magazines, that's what the skater kids care about. There's a whole other culture of people who watch it on TV, but generally those aren't the people who are really hardcore into it, who are buying the skateboards and watching the videos.

EGM: How many 900s have you pulled since your first?

A: I don't know, like four or five.

EGM: Do you get tired of people asking what your next big thing is?

TH: Yeah, people think the 1080's next, but I got no desire to kill myself with 1080s.

EGM: Describe a typical day for a pro skater?

JT: Depends on what kind of pro skater you are. I know I do a lot more of the business stuff, so a typical day for me is almost like a typical day for some business guy but in a skateboard line of work. I go to my companies and make sure all the team stuff is worked out, make sure all the graphics are done for the next catalog, whatever. A regular pro street skater, though, his typical day is just play video games and ride his skateboard, and if he wants to go shoot a photo or film something, that's up to him. It's basically play.

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Tony Hawk Revisited

The Original Version Returns on a Console Near You

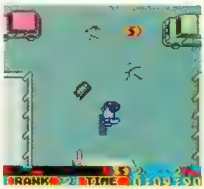
If you haven't played the original Tony Hawk's Pro Skater because you lack a PlayStation, you're running out of excuses—fast. The near-perfect N64 port should be hitting stores as you read this, and a Dreamcast version, due in May, is in the works from Crave, who licensed the game from Activision. Heck, even a Game Boy Color Pro Skater is on the way.

But let's be honest: It's the Dreamcast version, the prettiest incarnation of the bunch, that you really wanna know about. Developed for Crave by Treyarch (who's also creating the DC action-RPG Draconus), Tony Hawk's Pro Skater on the Dreamcast "is basically the same as the PlayStation game, except the look is highly enhanced," Gregory John, the game's producer at Treyarch, told us. "Certainly we didn't want to change the feel, because the original PlayStation game was fantastic."

So expect heavy déja vu if you've already torn through the PS version. The DC game packs identical courses, the same 10 pro skaters and all the original tunes and multiplayer modes. The original's perfect control translates just fine to the DC pad (Treyarch even found a workable solution to the DC controller's shortage of shoulder buttons).

And the visual enhancement is easy enough to spot. Treyarch has bumped up the skaters' polygon counts considerably. Characters in the PS game were built from roughly 500 polys; in the DC version, they each consist of more than 1,600. In other words, Tony Hawk's in-game incarnation has genuine ears and a nose now. The skateboard decks look more substantial, too. Peer closely and you can see their wheel and truck assemblies in astonishing detail (the boards themselves are built from roughly 200 polygons). The team boosted poly counts on curved surfaces such as half pipes and pools, making them appear more rounded and realistic. Treyarch also doubled the draw distance and repainted all the levels with higher-res textures. They're even adding new fall-down and victory animations. But here's the best bit of news: The game plays at a steady 30 frames per second.

The Dreamcast version also uses the VMU. Watch its tiny screen and you'll see the name of your last trick combo and how many points it got you. It's a handy little feature, since trick scores tend to disappear from the main game screen quickly.



Speaking of tiny screens, the Game Boy Color incarnation of THPS should hit stores in March. Developed by Natsume, this on-the-go version offers two play styles: a top-down street skating mode and a side-view vert ramp. Rest assured, Pro Skater on the Game Boy still packs the 10 pro skaters, the videotape-gathering goals and all the tricks of its console big brothers. Just expect gameplay that's highly reminiscent of the old-school skate gem 720°.

PlayStation version

Dreamcast version

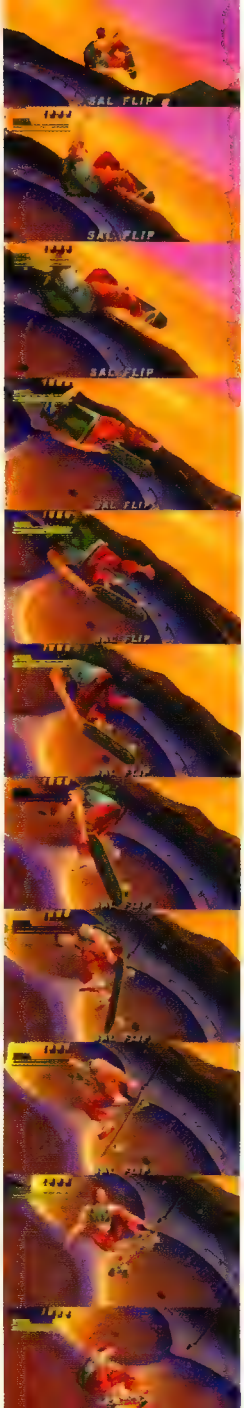


photo by Voldi Tanner

grabs abound, including the Airwalk, Crossbone, Indy Stiffy, Judo Air.

We just don't have enough room to list all the new kicktricks and gabs—from Varials to Shove Its—in this magazine. Neversoft has already implemented more than 30 new moves, and they'll cram in more over the next few months. Even tricks that aren't quite as popular with today's elite pros will make it into the game. "We're finding a lot of the older crowd in our audience," Rausch says, "and they're looking for the old-school skate stuff, so we're making everybody happy this time." The team has even addressed fans' minor gripes with the trick-naming conventions in the first game. A few moves in the original THPS—when you put a certain spin on them with the shoulder buttons—didn't register the correct trick name on screen. And a few grinds popped up with misnomers, too, raising the ire of hardcore skaters. All these minor problems have been fixed in the sequel.

Neversoft knows the original game's control system worked just fine. After all, it was this easy-to-learn, tough-to-master joypad setup that made THPS so addicting. So the team isn't about to mess with the sequel's control scheme. Instead, they're adding a few elements to it. Players can now perform a Manual by tapping up then down on the control pad. This move pops your front wheel in the air (or rear wheel, if you do a reverse Manual), and it's up to you to balance your skater with fine up and down movements of the pad. While in mid-Manual, you can pull off as many tricks as you like, as long as you keep your balance. Every trick you perform adds to your total combined points until you end the Manual or fall. "Now with Manuals you can link two elements that are halfway across the park if you can keep your balance going the whole way," Pease says. "It totally opens up a whole different way to play. You don't have to look for rails to keep your combo going."

Grabs come in two stages now, too. You can bust out of them quickly and miss out

You wake up at noon, and then on weekends—since street skaters can't skate at that many places on weekdays—you try to hook up with a couple of other guys and maybe a photographer, and then you try to shoot a photo of something. If the photo doesn't go good, then you just have fun skating at a spot, you just horse around with your friends and do that. And then at night, depending on your lifestyle, you either go to a movie or to a party or whatever.

TH: A lot of the guys I skate with are vert skaters, so they're not really restricted to skating on weekends or in schoolyards. They're waking up earlier and skating at skateparks for a good part of the day. It's kinda like training but obviously they're doing it because they love it. Now my typical day starts with me waking up early with the kids, getting them off to school, doing a lot of work, like e-mail and phone calls, through the day and probably going to skate and shooting photos or doing interviews, then picking up the kids and trying my best to be around them.

EGM: How much have you guys spent on medical bills?

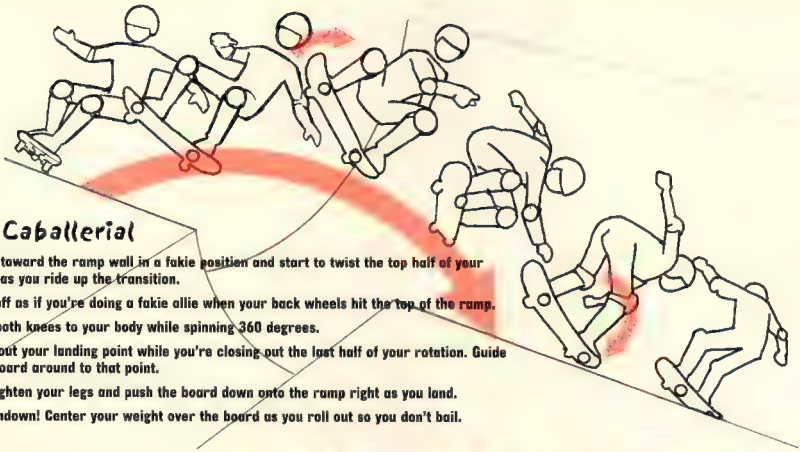
JT: Minimal compared to how much you make. Not to jinx either one of us, but if you work up to things, you don't get hurt as often.

TH: The whole perception about skating is that you just kind of fling yourself into tricks without thinking about the consequences, but that's not true. Everything we do is totally calculated. We practice this stuff forever. I mean, if you're gonna try to jump some big gap, you've been practicing other things similar to it to get up to that.

JT: Street skating's a little bit different than that. You really can't work up to something, or you have to work up to it in a different place. Say there's a 20-stair rail in front of you you want to grind. You have to go practice on a 10-stair, 15-stair and if there's not one on the premises, you're out of luck. You have to just do it. You can't just slide half of it and knee slide out. You either do it or don't.

TH: But there is a level of confidence that you reach, that you know you can do a trick, through so much practice. People think anyone can just grab a skateboard and try to go down a rail, and if they make it, they're a hero, but that's not really how it is.

JT: But then that brings in injury. For



The Caballerial

1. Head toward the ramp wall in a fakie position and start to twist the top half of your body as you ride up the transition.
2. Pop off as if you're doing a fakie ollie when your back wheels hit the top of the ramp.
3. Pull both knees to your body while spinning 360 degrees.
4. Pick out your landing point while you're closing out the last half of your rotation. Guide the board around to that point.
5. Straighten your legs and push the board down onto the ramp right as you land.
6. Touchdown! Center your weight over the board as you roll out so you don't bail.

new skateboarders, the chances of injury go up because they try to do what's in the skate videos before they're ready for that. The guys in the videos have been building up for 12 years. These guys who've only been skating a year try to skate like guys who've been skating 12 years. You can't skip the levels, bottom line. You got to learn to crawl before you can walk.

TH: The learning curve is a lot faster these days.

EGM: Why's that?

TH: Because kids have seen what is possible, and if you know what is possible, it's a lot easier to reach it, whereas when you're out there trying to innovate these things, you don't really know if it's possible, so there's this attitude that's scary.

JT: The message that gets put across from skate videos is this really is possible and everybody's doing it, and kids don't know this is really hard. They grow up accustomed to the fact that high-end tricks are the standard, but when we started skateboarding, the standard was a small trick of any sort.

TH: My son's 7 years old. He learned kickflips. I mean, kickflips hadn't even been invented until I'd been skating four years, and so for me to learn a kickflip took forever, because I'd already been focused on a certain style and how I thought skating was. He thinks it's just a normal average trick.

EGM: So what do you think tricks will be like, say, 20 years from now?

JT: Oh, 20 years, I don't even know. With technology and stuff...you see those future movies where every-

on full points, or you can hold your grab, tweak it a bit and earn the full score. The developers are also making it easier to switch your stance on the fly, and you'll notice a genuine difference between ollie and nollie tricks. At the same time, the game's animators are adding more bail and mishap animations. Foul up a grind and your skater will kerplunk, legs akimbo, onto the rail, taking a nasty pound to the family jewels. Character models will gradually suffer visible damage if they bounce too many times against the concrete. The art team is avoiding motion capture this time and animating all the new tricks by hand. "Our animator, Noel Hines, has just got everything freakin' nailed," Jewett says. "He's just in tune with the tricks. The guy can barely go 10 feet on a skateboard, but he can stand on the carpet and ollie waste high. It's from fully understanding the mechanics of how it all works."

On top of all the new tricks, real locations and customization options, Neversoft has dumped lots of gravy. They spruced up the graphics engine with improved real-time lighting effects on the skaters. The sound designer actually mounted a microphone on the bottom of a skateboard to record better effects. You'll get more music, between 15 and 20 tracks, and the tunes will be more diverse (everything from metal to hip-hop). The developers are even trying to build in a feature that lets you pop in your own CD. All the original multiplayer modes return, along with a new competition mode that lets up to eight people and their custom characters hash it out in a full-on skate tournament.

THPS2's long list of features is about to undergo serious scrutiny, thanks to all the competing titles like EA's Street Sk8er 2 and Sony's Grind Session, which are riding the wave of skate-game popularity created by the original THPS. But Neversoft prez Jewett isn't worried. He figures THPS2, just like the first game, will have everyone else playing catch-up. "You saw today, those guys Tony, Jamie and Chad came in and helped us out, we've got a design team that's just kick ass, and we have a head start on everybody," Jewett tells us. "So to the competition I say, 'See ya, wouldn't want to be ya.'"

Park It!

Play Skateboard God with the New Level Editor

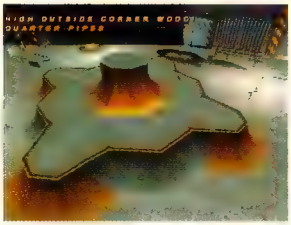
The development team calls it Pro Skater 2's "Big Enchilada," and it's the one feature that fans of the original game wanted most in this sequel. But could the new game's amazingly in-depth but easy-to-use skate-park editor also be—gasp!—the first-ever example of ultra-fun edutainment? "It's like a whole new experience because you can really learn how to design good gameplay at your house," Neversoft president Joel Jewett said. "It's like we're educating the masses. I'll start taking résumés next year."

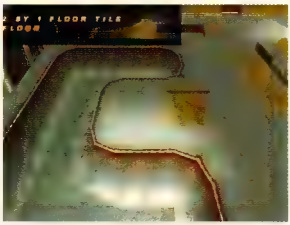
Educational value aside, THPS2's skate-park editor is so comprehensive that, for instance, you can build an exact replica of the first game's warehouse level in a matter of minutes. Unlike the 2D top-down level creator in Street Sk8er 2, this editor runs in 3D, letting you see your level in all its real-time glory as you build it. You can choose from hundreds of different skate-park parts, including dozens of different rails, quarter pipes, benches, ramps, obstacles and surfaces. You just select your part, rotate it into position, then drop it onto the floor.

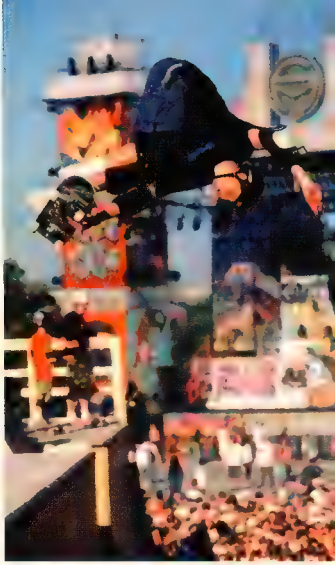
You can also build up to five levels of risers, then place rails or other obstacles on top of those, thus lifting your park to vertigo-inducing altitudes as high as 40 feet. You'll also be able to choose several park sizes, from the smaller competition-style arenas to more sprawling city-size arenas. Finally, you can switch between different theme settings. Pick "Goth," for instance, and watch every obstacle and wall in the level take on an appropriately gloomy look.

Testing your custom-built course is easy; at any time during construction, you can drop your skater into the level and give it a test run. When you're finally satisfied with your masterpiece, save it to the memory card (each custom park only takes one block), then access it in Free Skate or the multiplayer modes. Neversoft fully expects an Internet culture to build around this game, since fans will no doubt post their custom parks on the Web. The developers even plan to house a repository of homemade levels at www.neversoft.com.

To get your creative juices flowing, Neversoft will include at least 10 pre-made custom levels with the final game. They may include a lot more than that (as many as 100, in fact!) since the parks take up very little space on the CD. Tinker around with the pre-made tracks. Get the hang of the editor. Then cut your imagination loose. Whether you're a street skater or prefer big air, the editor gives you more than enough options to build your dream course. "We had a focus tester in here the other day," Producer Scott Pease said, "and all he did was lay down rails. It ended up looking like a line at Disney World."







body's floating about. It seems like that's possible. Who knows what's in store.

TH: Right now, though, in the immediate future, if you want to do something new, it's pretty much guaranteed that there's a much higher danger level than in the past. If you want to be noticed, if you want to outdo someone, it's gotta be something big.

EGM: What's your advice then to new skaters who eventually want to build to your level?

TH: Just learn the basics.

EGM: Can you do that on a K-Mart skating board?

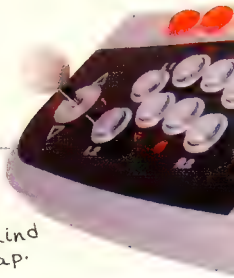
JT: Yeah, you can learn the basics. You can learn to ollie. But on a K-Mart board, all you're learning is control and being able to push. Once you get into any kind of tricks at all you need a better board. Otherwise, it's gonna be too heavy, it's gonna slow you down, everything's gonna be bananas, wacky, whatever. But learning all the basics is most important. The basics used to be an ollie and knowing how to jump on your board. Now basics is a kickflip, a 360 flip, so kids learn how to kickflip and 360 flip before they learn how to really ollie—

TH: Before they learn the type of balance they need to do other stuff that's gonna help them be more rounded. There's kids who can do a 360 but they can't go up and over a small ramp.

Power Tools

Peripheral Reviews

Shawn_Smith@zd.com



Top Drive GTO

Company	System	Price
Spectra Video	PS	$29.99

While the GTO Wheel looks quite nice, it doesn't bring anything particularly revolutionary to the table. It's simply a wheel. Furthermore, the placement of some of the buttons is questionable, it's not very comfortable and the overall feel is cheap. It does support a lot of modes though. Driving enthusiasts may want to steer clear, and wait for something more professional. It's a wheel for average joe gamer.

www.logic3.com

Nice-looking, but it feels kind of cheap.

Dual Force

Company	System	Price
Mad Catz	PS	$39.99

As always, the idea behind infrared pads is what dreams are made of—control without being bounded to your system. Problem is, wireless controllers require batteries and often cut out if you're too far away. This reasonably priced Mad Catz duo is no different. In addition, the rumble is quite buzzy in most games. Nice design, but it'd be best to stick with corded pads.

www.madcatz.com

The analog knob has a nice feel.

these plugs are a tad snug.

Dream Master

Company	System	Price
Nyko	DC	$29.99

Even though the Dream Master has a neat transparent blue shell, the thing just doesn't feel very good. It's unnecessarily bulky and the buttons and triggers feel stiff (although the analog is quite nice). Furthermore, the construction is a little on the shoddy side (colors are off, cheesy fonts and rough molding). As usual, it'd be better to go with a first-party pad.

www.nyko.com

It's a little on the bulky side.

GameShark CDX

Company	System	Price
InterAct	PS	$49.99

If you have one of those stripped-down new PS units with no expansion port, and you want some mad cheats, look into the GameShark CDX. It uses a memory card-type device and a CD you boot up before you play your game. Just pick the codes you want, take out the CDX CD, insert your game and you're ready to go. It has all of the features of the GameShark Pro. All we ask is don't ruin your game-playing experience by using too many codes from the get-go!

www.interact-acc.com

look how stinkin' big this thing is!

Twin Arcade Stick

Company	System	Price
Blaze	PS	$59.99

Take two Blaze Pro Shock Arcade Sticks and put them into one gigantic controller cabinet. The net result is the Twin Arcade Stick—the Big Poppa of arcade fighting sticks. The thing accommodates two people at once for crying out loud. And since it uses a lot of the same technology found in the Pro Shocks, you can count on it being high-quality (though a tad clicky during intense play). Fighting fanatics: Take note.

www.blaze-gear.com

SharkWire Online

Company	System	Price
InterAct	N64	$39.99

Who says you need a DC to get online? Not InterAct. Now you can check the Web, send and receive e-mail and even get codes and walkthroughs. Problem is, even though the SharkWire package gives you a modem, keyboard and a chance to do something truly interesting with your N64, there isn't a whole lot to look at once you get on the limited SharkWire Web site (you can't go outside of the SharkWire site). Signing on is a snap, and so is creating an account (which costs roughly $10 per month). But all in all, the technology isn't quite there yet even though it's a wonderful concept. If only it allowed you to surf anywhere on the Web!

www.interact-acc.com

Pseudo VMUs

Chances are you've seen third-party Dreamcast memory cards on store shelves lately that have no screen, and cannot play mini-games. **InterAct**, **Nyko** and **Mad Catz** all have them on the market. These bare-bones DC cards are *usually* a little cheaper than Sega's VMU, and may or may not hold more data. But are they worth it? Well, look at it this way: The VMU really isn't being used to its full potential, so it's not imperative you own one (Zombie Revenge, TrickStyle and a few other games utilize the mini-game stuff but not too many). Besides, the VMU tends to eat batteries rather fast during mini-game use. So, if you're low on dough, consider one of these no-frills cards to hold your data, and save yourself a little money. Just remember: As a general rule, excessive memory compression isn't recommended when dealing with important save data since it can potentially lose saves. Stick with no compression if possible.

It's next to impossible to get the VMU out of here!

Alloy Arcade Stick

Company	System	Price
InterAct	DC	$49.99

No doubt the Alloy Arcade Stick is the most ergonomic and futuristic-looking fighting stick we've ever used. But looks aside, the thing has some problems. First, the stick is too tight, making it difficult to pull off some moves. Next, the button layout needs some work. And finally, the VMU slot isn't quite right—as we could barely remove the thing once it was inserted! Unfortunately, it'd be best to go with the bland-looking (but high-quality) Agetec stick.

www.interact-acc.com

You can't beat chrome!

*Reflection of Michael Stassus not included

Review Crew

Crispin Boyer

Finally, Crispin's war with Shawn over the merits of the George Foreman Grill is over. Cris has won. The grilled turkey burgers are on him. Unfortunately, not even free burgers were enough to keep Shoe, Che and Ricciardi from leaving the halls of *EGM*. Good luck, guys. Cris and his grill will miss you.

Current Favorites
Faselei!, Turdeat

Favorite Genres
Action, Adventure

Che Chou

All the hate mail has finally gotten to Che. He's decided to pack it up in Chicago. He wants to thank the readers for all the feedback. Who knows what awaits him in California, where he joins Shoe and Ricciardi in discovering the true meaning of the word "portal."

Current Favorites
Code: Veronica, RRV, Faselei!, DoA2, Kessen, PS2

Favorite Genres
Fighting, Racing, RPG

John Davison

Johnny England found it hard to concentrate on reviewing crap like Countdown Vampires this month knowing that Ridge Racer V was playing on a big phat TV just down the hall. Fortunately Eidos' Sword of the Berserk was around to keep everyone's faith in the Dreamcast.

Current Favorites
Ridge Racer V, Sword of the Berserk

Favorite Genres
Action, Racing

Dean Hager

It's been quite an eventful month for Dean. One of his most grueling deadlines ever was made even worse by the arrival of the PS2 (just days before his work was due no less). For the love of God, somebody hide Ridge Racer V until after deadline!

Current Favorites
Ridge Racer V, Hot Shots Golf 2, Hide the Salami III

Favorite Genres
Sports/Racing

Dan Hsu "Shoe"

After four years of being on Review Crew, Shoe has finally called it quits! Can you believe, he's leaving the glory of working for *EGM* to work on some Web site? We think he'll be back when this internet "fad" goes away. His cheeky grin will be sorely missed.

Current Favorites
DoA2, Soul Calibur, Swirl, Chu Chu Rocket, Three Man

Favorite Genres
Puzzle, Strategy, Action

Chris Johnston

CJ recently moved into his own place, but hasn't had time to fix the place up between deadline and going to Japan for the PS2 launch. Maybe our eternally single Review Crewer will find a fun-lovin' grrrl gamer with whom to share it with (especially with ladies' men Shoe and Che gone...just kidding guys—we'll all miss ya!).

Current Favorites
Ridge Racer V, Rayman 2

Favorite Genres
Adventure, Puzzle

Shiny New Review Crew Member?

What's the deal?!

Is anyone coming? Hot new top-secret things are brewing here, so secret even we don't know what they are. But as soon as we get cleared for that level of James Bond kinda stuff, we'll let our loyal readers in on it too!

Shawn Smith

Shawn has given up. He's sick and tired of being sick and tired about the George Foreman Grill and old people. He has finally seen the light, and is now using the Foreman grill regularly to feed old people in his neighborhood. Let's just hope he doesn't start using the thing *on* old people.

Current Favorites
Rayman 2, MediEvil 2, Turdeat, Speed Punks

Favorite Genres
Action, Adventure

Team EGM

The baseball video game season is under way and the scent of hot dogs and popcorn is swimming through the dense Midwest air. Although there's a bit of discrepancy between our views of EA's Triple Play 2001, there was no doubt that the console baseball game to play is Acclaim's All-Star Baseball 2001. On the other hand, 989's MLB 2001 is missing in action, and history has a way of indicating that it's often a sign of a poor game to come.

Dan Leahy

Current Favorites
ASB 2001, NHL 2K, screenshots of PS2 sports games

With opening day just around the corner, Dan's itching to get out of the office for some daytime Wrigley fun. He's even considering moonlighting as the Beer Man in exchange for bulk discounts on his favorite frothy beverage. Without the beer gig, he'll have to ask for a Team EGM raise. Yeah...

Kraig Kujawa

Current Favorites
Triple Play 2001, Madden 2001 and anything PS2

With the PlayStation2 in the office, Kraig can't wait to get a hold of some darned sports games for the thing. Until then he'll just have to go back to playing more Madden NFL 2001 as he watches all of the free-agent moves during the offseason, hoping that the Packers will snag a gem.

Todd Zuniga

Current Favorites
NHL 2K, March Madness 2000, Rock the Rink, All-Star Baseball 2001

Todd's been doing little work at the office as of late. He's always leaving early to watch his St. Louis Blues put a chapping on another hockey team's ass, night after night. He's also tried out PS2, but can't figure out its value without a hockey game, by which all things should be judged.

This Month...

We promise, the PlayStation2 had nothing to do with the number of low scores we dished out this month. On the one hand, we had beautiful, immaculate games like Rayman 2 and Dead or Alive 2 on the Dreamcast; then the other end of the spectrum is occupied by the likes of Countdown Vampires, High Heat Baseball...ugh, too many to list here. It was also a month overloaded with too many review games: At least eight PlayStation games failed to make the cut. As the PS enters its final cycle, big companies are pushing out some of the crappiest titles ever, just to capitalize on the current PS installed base. It's a time of transition, it's the time for the Dreamcast to shine.

Our Philosophy

10 9 8 7 6 **5** 4 3 2 1 **0**

EGM rates games based on how they compare with other titles on the same system. The highest score we'll give a game is a 10. When a game receives a 10, you can rest assured it's one of the best games ever made—a revolutionary title that truly stands above everything else in its genre for its time. At the other end of the spectrum sits the lowest score a game can receive: a 0.0. This is the kind of game you want to avoid at all costs. It's pure crap, as our scale (above) explains. In the middle lies the average grade, 5.0. We repeat: 5.0 IS AN AVERAGE GRADE. Simple, ain't it?

Our Awards

Platinum Awards go to games that get four 10's, the best and rarest review a game can get.

Gold Awards go to games whose average score equals 9.0 or higher.

Games that average at least an 8.0 receive **Silver Awards.**

Publisher: Ubi Soft
Developer: Ubi Soft
Featured In: *EGM* #126
Players: 1 (with 4-player mini-game)
Supports: Jump Pack
Best Feature: Amazing visuals
Worst Feature: Minor camera problems
Web Site: www.rayman2.com/dc

"Wow—that game looks amazing." It was a phrase I couldn't escape hearing from passing co-workers, day in and day out, as I played the Dreamcast version of Rayman 2. And, yes, this thing looks unbelievable, the closest any game has ever been to resembling a real-time cartoon. While the N64 version looked pretty in its own right, the DC game packs new effects like falling leaves and extra background characters, and the whole thing runs at a smooth 60 FPS. Better still: **The gameplay's as solid as the visuals.** Rayman 2 melds myriad play styles. In addition to the standard platform action, you'll waterski, ride a bucking missile, earn the ability to fly, rocket down a beam of light on a single-seat monorail, and much more. Except for the usual camera quirks that plague these types of games, the varied gameplay styles all work incredibly well. Rayman 2 will keep you busy for a while, too; it packs more than 50 levels, including three new stages exclusive to the DC version. You also get a four-player mini-game (which'll take you a while to open). On March 15, Ubi Soft is also unveiling the site www.rayman2.com/dc, from which you'll be able to download new maps, chat with fellow Rayman 2 fans and see their best times, nab special holiday downloads, etc. The Dreamcast needs a game like this. And so do you.

Crispin

This is one beautiful game. After seeing the PC version more than a year ago, I knew any DC version would look spectacular. Here it is, and it does look great. It also plays really well—**just as good/better than the N64 version.** This is the first real platformer on the DC where you can fully explore all parts of the game's world (Sonic didn't quite capture that feeling). As a fan of action platform games, I can say that Rayman is one to add to your collection.

Chris

What an amazing-looking game. Better yet, **the game's as fun to play as it is good-looking.** It has gigantic levels and tons of stuff to collect (I'm a big fan of this stuff when it's not ridiculously tedious), so getting 100 percent on this one will take you some time. The control is right-on for a 3D action/adventure game as well, and works really well with the DC pad. And I can't wait for the online stuff—it really increases its replayability in a whole new way.

Shawn

Rayman 2 was a great game on the N64 and I have to say that it's equally as great on Dreamcast. The presentation is second to none and **in places looks like a CG cartoon rather than a platform game**—but it's the flow of the game and the way it carries you through the vast levels that really impresses the most. This is one of those games that sucks you in and takes up hours of your life without you realizing it. A sure sign of a truly great game.

John

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
10	8	8	8

Publisher: Eidos
Developer: Yuke's
Featured In: *EGM* #130
Players: 1
Supports: Jump Pack
Best Feature: Graphics and high production value
Worst Feature: FMV overdose
Web Site: www.eidos.com

Sword of the Berserk is a real mixed bag. This Final Fight-style game is fairly mindless and repetitive (as in, plow through level after level, destroying all who get in your way without strategy or skill). Most of the time, it really feels like you're just going through the motions. The enemies, although interesting and varied, are as stupid as the game's title. You can often shoot them from a distance, and they'll just sit there and take it like dummies (the crossbow-wielding mofos, on the other hand, have better AI as demonstrated by their unwillingness to fight in close quarters with you). The only things that break up the monotony are the painfully long real-time cutscenes and the occasional action/cinematic sequence where you have to tap the right button at the right time (a la Dynamite Cop). So why the good review score? The graphics are incredible. The music and sound FX (especially in Surround Sound) are grand. The camera work is some of the best I've ever seen in a 3D game. The cutscenes are excellent, even though there's too much of it. The voice acting is class A. The boss fights (especially the last two) kick serious booty. Add all those up, and you have a so-so game with such incredibly high production value, you can't help but enjoy it more than other games of this type. **This is what Soul Fighter should've been.**

Shoe

Once upon a Christmas break, I spent a magical evening beating the import version of Berserk while my girlfriend cooked kalbi in the kitchen. It took her two hours to prepare dinner. By the time she was finished with the food, so was I with the game. **It wasn't very long, and it wasn't very deep, but I loved it** every bit as much as the BBQ I had that evening. The U.S. version has surprisingly good voice acting and is a lot harder. Nice one, Eidos!

Che

I played the Japanese version of this a lot and loved it, but now that Eidos has picked it up, it's reassuring to see that U.S. tastes have been catered for. For a start, the game is now much harder than the original release, making the whole thing much more of a challenge. Second, **the production values are unusually high** with some splendid voice acting and gorgeous visuals. This is what Soul Fighter should have been. Check it out.

John

With all of the Ps2 goodness in the office this month, we needed a Dreamcast game to restore our faith in Sega's machine. Eidos seems to have done it again. In licensing (and subsequently enhancing) Berserk, they have done us all a proud service. **The graphics are spectacular throughout**—and even get pretty trippy toward the end. Plus the English voice acting is considerably more professional than a lot of the translation jobs we've seen lately!

Chris

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	9	7	7

EGM SILVER

Dead or Alive 2

All of the cutscenes in Dead or Alive 2 are rendered in real time. The quality of the characters, whether during combat or close-up, are absolutely amazing. Too bad the story didn't make much sense...

Publisher:	Tecmo
Developer:	Team Ninja
Featured In:	*EGM* #129
Players:	1-4
Supports:	Jump Pack
Best Feature:	Graphics, tag team, kogals galore
Worst Feature:	Tag team battles only on one stage
Web Site:	www.tecmoinc.com

The PS2 has hardly been out a week and we're already back to playing our Dreamcasts. That's right, you heard us—we've been jamming on Dead or Alive 2, courtesy of Tecmo and Team Ninja. We've seen what the PS2 launch had to offer, and while RRV is impeccable to the nth degree, SFEX3 left quite a bit to be desired. The truth is, DoA2 gives most PS2 launch games a serious run for their money in the eye candy department. And to use a cliché, don't believe the hype. Industry pundits will argue that DoA2 on the PS2 will look better, but the graphical difference will likely be negligible. If games like DoA2 and Code: Veronica are any indicators of a system's vitality, the Dreamcast's is alive and well.

But enough about its competition, how does DoA2 play? The gameplay has gone through an overhaul of sorts, but DoA2 still

Like Bushido Blade, DoA2 features huge multi-leveled arenas. Above, Ein jumps down after Bass to continue the fight.

feels like the bastard lovechild of Virtua Fighter and Tekken. The difference in the sequel is the addition of a "Free" button which performs a number of functions. Primarily, the Free button allows you to move about in 3D. It works, but it's not as intuitive as the 8-Way Run in Soul Calibur. While blocking is done Tekken style, you can also hold down Free to block. This seems a little indecisive, but it's nice for the VF kids. Despite the improved counter system, most fights still rely too heavily on pulling off reversals. Soul Calibur balanced out its Guard Impact system by penalizing missed parries with longer delays. In DoA2, players can reverse moves with impunity because there's hardly any penalty for a missed counter. To make matters worse, you can't use the Free button to cancel moves, so that kills the mind game potential. Still, DoA2 excels in presenting gratuitous viscera where it counts, and that goes a long way in making it one of the most immersive fighting games ever made.

Dead or Alive 2 is, by all practical standards, a technical masterpiece. Visually, DoA2 is the game that will reinstate your confidence in the power of Sega's little white box, in a time when the whole world is fixated overseas at its encroaching competition. There's just so much going on visually. Everything from the flow of clothing, to the seamless character models (polygons? what polygons?), all combine to create one of the most breathtaking games I've ever seen. DoA2's animation and collision detection engine achieves a sense of consistency that's actually rare with 3D fighters. Other cool additions include the four-player tag battle mode, where up to four friends can tag combo each other 'til the proverbial cows come home. My one gripe with the Dreamcast version is the weak practice mode—there's just no excuse for the omission of a moves list. Some of you may take issue with DoA2's twitchy gameplay and reversal heavy tactics. The problem here is that beginners will mash their way to victory, while experts sit back and turtle with reversals (there's little penalty if you miss). It's a solid fighting engine, but it's just too bad that DoA2 won't get the gameplay respect it really deserves. It's not as deep as Soul Calibur, and it's not as popular as Tekken...but **if you own a Dreamcast, this game is a must-buy.**

Che

DoA2 would be this system's best fighter to date, had Namco not brought out you-know-what. Everything about this game is absolutely amazing: excellent hit detection, ultra-realistic animation, beautiful backgrounds, etc. The fighting engine isn't as flashy/arcadey as some other popular titles—this is definitely better suited for more hardcore players. But once you get used to this fighting style, you'll be hooked. This is a deep and wonderful game.

Shoe

Can it be any more clear that the DC is a fighting game fan's dream machine? DoA2 has flair, style and substance. It looks fantastic...but it's not all about the eye candy. Sure, the throws and combos and knocking your enemy off a 100' tall cliff will make you go "wow" more than once, but it all adds greatly to the gameplay. **The four-player mode rules too.** Just make sure you get paired up with someone who knows what he/she's doing.

Crispin

There's a lot about DoA2 that's extremely satisfying: The exaggerated attacks and how they connect, the intense tag mode, the way you can smack people against a concrete wall and watch them slump over, and that you can knock enemies through a pane of glass and watch them fall some 30 feet to a new area in an arena. The fighting system is pretty nice, too. I would've liked more interesting characters, but overall it's a solid, very pretty fighter

Shawn

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	9	8	8

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INFOGRAMES

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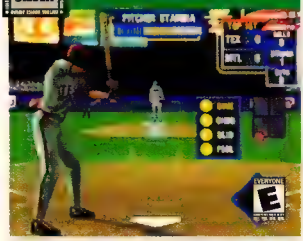
All-Star Baseball 2001



Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Acclaim
Featured In: *EGM #127*
Players: 1-4
Supports: Rumble Pak
Best Feature: It feels like baseball
Worst Feature: No playoff stat tracking
Web Site: www.acclaim.com

I'll start by stating that **Acclaim has made the best console baseball game of the year**, in a franchise which represents the best sports games you'll find on the N64. There aren't too many changes overall, which is fine by me since I thought last year's game was great. This one is a few Pedro Martinez curveballs above that. One of the changes was the addition of the hot and cold meters, which give a sense of how the player will do and has been doing. Another addition is the ability to slide away from tags. If the ball is waiting for you, sometimes a great slide will reward you. On the other hand, sometimes you'll overslide by bad timing. But there's no penalty for it. Not good. My favorite part of the game is how the stars really shine. Pedro Martinez can be nearly unhittable, Roberto Alomar is one of the toughest outs in the American league, and the murderer's row known as the Yankees is a pitching nightmare. But any baseball game should be judged on its ability to track stats and do it realistically. Throughout a season I was pleased by the way my high average hitters didn't stay above .400 and my Mendoza-men got above .200 quickly. Oh, and the stat tracking is on par with *Rain Man*'s Raymond. You'll even get Gold Gloves awarded for outstanding defensive play. There's a lot to this one. Don't miss it. **Todd**

All-Star Baseball 2001 flies in the face of everything Acclaim has released in recent memory, which is a good thing. **Finally, N64 jocks have a game which their PlayStation friends actually want to play.** ASB 2001 captures the essence of the pitcher/batter showdown perfectly, making each at-bat as fun as the last. It doesn't hurt that everything looks great (thank you Expansion Pak) either. ASB 2001 should be in every baseball junkie's collection. **Dan L**

Not surprisingly, ASB 2001 is very similar to last year's game. That's a good thing, after all, look what happened to Quarterback Club when they "updated" it...ouch. Don't look for the power-hit option, it's gone. Apparently it was too easy to smack a home run. **So what do you have? Basically updated rosters, a few new moves and a damn good baseball sim overall.** I still believe All-Star Baseball is the finest sports series the N64 has to offer. **Dean**

There's no doubt that the strengths of this game are its realism and graphics. **If you want the best-looking baseball game, go no further than ASB 2001.** On the gameplay side, there's a lot of things to like, especially the innovative batting "heads-up" display that lets you aim where you want to hit the ball. I do think that the quiet atmosphere and pedestrian pace of the game could be jazzed up, but you really can't go wrong with this one. **Kraig**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	8	8	9

Daikatana

Publisher: Kemco
Developer: Kemco
Featured In: *EGM #129*
Players: 1-4
Supports: Rumble Pak
Best Feature: Plenty of big guns
Worst Feature: Dull gameplay
Web Site: www.top-gear.com

The phrase "don't believe the hype" has never applied more to a video game. Nearly everything about Daikatana is a letdown. Choppy, drawn-out cutscenes string together a confusing, muddled plot. Touchy control makes jumping from platform to platform a nightmare. You don't get the AI buddies featured in the soon-to-be-released PC version. And multiplayer is seriously lacking in both modes and options. It's just too bad, because this game had so much going for it. I was happy to see RPG elements applied to a first-person shooter (skills like speed and power level up when you kill enough enemies). But in reality, these boosts have little effect on your performance. The levels are strewn across different time periods; you'll visit ancient Greece and a future Japan, among other time zones. Nevertheless, the gameplay is so linear and the puzzles are so mindless that this thing gets boring pretty quickly. The visuals are a bit above-average (just don't bother with the choppy hi-res mode), and you get plenty of weapons, but those are the only perks you'll find in this game. I'm not sure why N64 Daikatana was released before the PC version. It needs more dev time. If only Kemco had put extra effort into the multiplayer modes, I could overlook many of the game's single-player shortcomings. **Crispin**

If action games can get any more dry, monotonous and annoying than this, then kill me now, please. Daikatana falls way short of the mark. The levels are drab and unimaginative. The action and gameplay leave plenty to be desired. You can salvage a lousy single-player experience by pumping it up with cool multiplayer features, but that is something this game definitely does not have. **No options and no variety mean no good score for this poop.** **Shoe**

If I didn't know any better, I'd say Daikatana isn't quite finished. **A lot of the story seems thrown together**, enemies just stand there while you kill them, most of the puzzles are boring and/or tedious (why platform jumping?) and the multiplayer stuff is boring. I enjoyed jumping around to different time periods. I also like the various weapons, and how they fit the time period. But overall, it'd be better just to keep playing your copy of GoldenEye. **Shawn**

The great and mighty Daikatana. One of the most eagerly awaited FPS games on the PC, and by some weird f'ed-up logic it comes to the N64 first—and without many of the promised features. It's not anything revolutionary. The story isn't particularly wonderful, the action isn't exactly seat-of-the-pants and the graphics are nothing to write and tell mom about. Avoid the hi-res mode—it gets REAL choppy. **A terrible disappointment.** **John**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	5	4	4

Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2K

Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Acclaim
Featured In: *EGM #129*
Players: 1-4
Supports: Rumble Pak
Best Feature: It's fun...
Worst Feature: Gameplay is one dimensional
Web Site: www.Acclaim.com

JM Supercross 2000 isn't going to set the gaming world on fire, but for the casual racing fan it'll be challenging enough. I say the "casual fan" because it's not as realistic as the original PS version. But, **on its own merits, the title has plenty going for it.** Graphically it's sharp with nice lighting, cool effects (dirt flying, smoke, etc.), and good detail overall. There's not much fog or draw-in either. I definitely like that...I can't stand foggy backgrounds. The gameplay while arcade-like, is solid enough, especially when coupled with the speedy frame-rate. Most of the riding skill comes from knowing how long to hold a turn in order to come out clean on the other side. Steering clear of the barriers virtually guarantees a wreck-free race. Once you master that, it gets much easier (and possibly boring, depending how you look at it). You'll want to crank the difficulty level to Pro as soon as possible. Beginner and Intermediate are just too darn easy. Unfortunately the stunt portion is only fun for a few minutes before the novelty wears off. The tricks interface is too simple. To be fair, no other moto-X game does it well either (Excitebike 64 is yet to be determined). Two-player is good fun but four-player split-screen is too slow. I hate to say it, but given the easy learning curve, JM Supercross will make a great two-day rental. **Dean**

Jeremy McGrath might be more fun if the frame-rate wasn't so choppy, and the control wasn't so loose (strangely even when I set it on tight). But then, **there isn't a whole lot to the game that makes it fun.** Pulling off showboat moves doesn't really gain you anything, and the Freestyle Mode is pointless (basically you and a couple of big jumps to do tricks off of, but absolutely no real gameplay). I also found I got stuck on the sides of courses a lot. **Shawn**

The controls are too twitchy, the frame-rate's a bit slow, the graphics aren't that great and it's a bit on the boring side. BUT it does have a cool track building feature that harks back to the good ol' days of Racing Destruction Set. **I ended up ditching the "real" game and making my own crazy courses** with huge jumps and ridiculous bendy bits. I can't recommend that you buy this...but it's maybe worth an hour's rental or something. **John**

Is motocross racing making some sort of comeback that I don't know about, or am I just old and out of touch? The pinnacle of dirt bike racing for me is still Motoracer 2, and in that respect, Jeremy McGrath doesn't even compare. The main problem here is that **the game lacks any form of excitement.** If you're racing in a pack, the frame-rate dips horrendously, causing you to lose control of the bike. It's also easy to get stuck on the side of the track. **Che**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	6	5	5

FORCED FEEDBACK

SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR LOYAL SUBSCRIBERS ONLY! EGM 130

COMMENTS? FORCED FEEDBACK • P.O. BOX 3338 • OAK BROOK, IL 60522-3338 • E-MAIL: SHAWN_SMITH@ZD.COM

CELEBRITY ROAST: DAN "SHOE" HSU

GOODBYE, OLD FRIEND.

It's hard to believe Shoe isn't going to be working here anymore. He is far more than simply a co-worker to us—he is a friend. Back in the olden days when Ed Semrad was in charge, Shoe, Crispin and Shawn toughed it out against seemingly impossible odds. Then new staffers came on to join the team and the family grew. Nowadays, we're an extremely tight-knit group. And while we hate to see Shoe go, we can't help but be happy for the guy and his new opportunity (and for Wendy of course!). Shoe added his own unique sense of humor to the mag—something we all love, and something many of you identify with month after month. Things may never quite be the same here, but we'll continue to bring you the best gaming reviews, previews and news in the industry—it'll just have to be without the one and only Shoe! Good luck buddy, and much love. Oh, of course we couldn't let him leave unscathed, so we're giving him a little going-away roast. Remember: We hurt the ones we love the most.

john cyril crispin jim chris dean

Shoe...loves his booze, shaves his nads and can say almost exactly the wrong thing at exactly the wrong time. Spanks guys on the a$$ too, but not in a girly, weird, effeminate way...he does it like a big tough man. He'll spank your ass really hard without messing around. Apparently he knows something about games too. We'll miss you Shoe.

Hey, what can I say about Dan that hasn't already been said: short, mischievous, blunt, happy drunk, shave tail, lesbian, first-person shooter, drunk, fashion plate, lover, fighter, raging homosexual, porn addict, sham marriage, alcohol-soaked, great in the sack, loves alcohol and Wendy. He'll be greatly missed as a friend and co-worker.

OK, like Vicki on the Love Boat—except not as hot—Shoe's our events coordinator. He throws the biggest parties, drags us to the best strip clubs and singlehandedly turned half the staff into raging alcoholics with his chug-shots-til-you-drop bar fests. He even let me housesit his pad a few times and never once asked about the weird stains I left behind.

Everyone knows Shoe's a great guy. He's the kind of guy you can count on...to say the most inflammatory thing at just the wrong time. You can count on him...as long as you're buying him his weight in alcohol. I mean it's going to be tough to find an editor with his credentials, his personality, his clean-shorn testies. We love you Shoe, you SOB, don't forget us.

It's the memories of Shoe that we'll all remember: Finding him sleeping under his desk during deadline, walking through the office brushing his teeth, drunken challenges to kiss Che, causing trouble in the old office and parties where he walked into screen doors repeatedly. Did this guy ever work? Good luck in the future Shoe—we'll all miss your antics!

Shoe leaving us? The place just won't be the same. Well at least we don't have to worry about the bathroom being sprayed with feces again. Seriously, we don't think Shoe was the fabled poop-blaster...although we'll never know. He really is a great editor, a smooth talker and a loving husband. I'm gonna miss that smart-ass sonofabitch.

andrew che shawn

Good bye Shoe! I'm gonna miss your hypothetical jokes, practical jokes and a little of your ass slappin'. Can we still play Dark Reign after you're gone? Who's gonna call us to hang out? Who's gonna call us over for those wild drunken orgies? Who is gonna stick up for us when the bathroom's hygiene goes down the tubes? Who damnit?!

Ahhh Shoe, I hardly knew ye. You were my mentor—and my first friend. You made me write more previews than anyone else. Then you gave me the Arcade section—also known as the red-headed stepchild of previews. For six months, we battled in Soul Calibur, while shunning work and significant others. Now I'll never get that $C money you owe me.

You know, if it wasn't for his over-the-top antics, Shoe would just be another nameless suburban turd. Seriously though, I will miss him dearly. He's like a brother to me — the one no one likes to talk about. The one who molested the family pets. The one who turned out to be the mail man's son. Good luck, you fortunate SOB. See you at the local porn store.

EGM's Random Quote of the Month

"Let's play hide the bottle."

Dan Hsu suggested we play this game at a recent party he threw. Apparently, he learned this game while serving some time for "man slaughter."

WIN STUFF

It's Quite Simple: We're Giving Away A Bunch of Stuff for Free

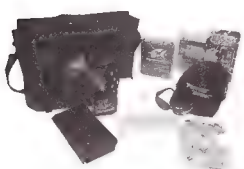
As you may or may not know, we get a lot of cool items from game companies. And yes, we do appreciate them, but all too often after looking at them for a while they end up sitting in somebody's cubicle or getting stored in a cabinet. So we thought, "Let's pass some of these things on to our readers, instead of just having them lay around." After all, better you enjoy this stuff than us. Like last month, read the instructions below, send in a postcard and you might just be picked as the winner! This doesn't cost you anything—**it's as simple as sending in a postcard with your name, address and phone number on it to the address below.** We'll then pick one winner in a few weeks, and send out the goods.

EGM's Box o' Stuff Sweepstakes #130
c/o Electronic Gaming Monthly
P.O. Box 3338
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338

Congrats to EGM #128 Winner
Jason De Bair of San Jose, CA

Take a look at what we're passing on to you this month:

- **A Perfect Dark windbreaker**
- **A pair of Perfect Dark shades**
- **A Perfect Dark hat**
- **A 989 Studios attaché (a collector's item for sure)**
- **A Thrasher magazine T-shirt**
- **A PlayStation wallet/ organizer from Sony**
- **Some fuzzy dice**
- **A Pokémon Snap guide**
- **A little keychain game**
- **A GameShark Pro for the GB**
- **A Mega Memory card for the GB**
- **And more!**



LEGAL STUFF

1. No Purchase Necessary. To enter, send a standard size postcard containing your name, address, and phone number to "EGM Box O' Stuff Sweepstakes", PO Box 3338, Oak Brook, Illinois 60522-3338. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. One entry per household per month. Entries must be handwritten and must be received by the 15th day of each month to qualify for that month's sweepstakes. Mechanically reproduced entries will be void. All entries become exclusive property of ZIff-Davis and will not be acknowledged or returned. ZIff-Davis assumes no responsibility for lost, misdirected, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due, or misdirected entries. ZIff-Davis reserve the right to cancel this sweepstakes at any time with appropriate notice.

2. Prizes: 1 Grand Prize. Each month the Grand Prize winner will receive a package containing miscellaneous items from the EGM offices with a total approximate retail value of at least $30. Winners shall be determined by a random drawing from all valid entries by EGM editors whose decisions are final. Drawing to be held on or about the last day of each month. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prize(s) are non-transferable. No substitutions of prize(s) are allowed, except at the option of ZIff-Davis should the listed prizes become unavailable.

3. Odds of Winning: The number of winners and the odds of winning will be determined by number of valid entries received.

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6. Restrictions: Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply.

7. Sponsor: This sweepstakes is sponsored solely ZIff-Davis, 1[illegible] 20, Inc.

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WEB SITES

PHATTER THAN FAT

Thank you to all who continue to send us sites. We love checking them out more than we love cheese. As usual, here are all kinds of sites: Weird, gaming-related, zany, funny, cool, stupid and so on and so forth. Send Web site submissions to **shawn_smith@zd.com**

- **cim.ucdavis.edu/Eyes/Version15/eyesim.shtml**
- **www.dinofish.com**
- **www.seanet.com/~lacas/magic.html**
- **www.doodoo.com**
- **www.ebgang.net**
- **www.wwfhangout.com**
- **www.ahhhhh.com**
- **www.realtrapdoor.com/trapdoor1.html**
- **www.hecklers.com/terrortrainer/pokemon.html**
- **members.xoom.com/tdchome/index.htm**
- **www.crazybitch.com**
- **www.geocities.com/xfskx/**
- **www.wrestling2x.com**
- **smallwonder.simplenet.com/Images/VICI_Y2K.gif**
- **www.etoy.com**

* We cannot be held responsible for any of the material presented on the sites listed above. Parents or guardians may want to verify the content of the site(s) before allowing their children to venture forth. Remember to surf safely.

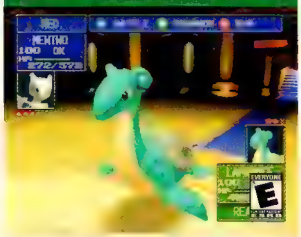
HOT & NOT

@ EGM

The EGM Hot & Not list—a place where you can get an inside look at what the staff of EGM likes and dislikes. The list contains general and specific items, concepts, games, people and more. Note: Particular entries may or may not coincide with the opinions of particular staffers.

- **Frankenstein's monster**
- **Ape Escape dancing ape**
- **New system launches**
- **Gundam Wing**
- **Color Palm Pilots**
- **Dreamcast Network**
- **Pokémon TCG**
- **ESPN Zone LBE**
- **Acronyms**
- **PS2 as a game system**
- **PS2 being able to play DVDs**
- **Taiwan's southern coastline**
- **Hot springs**
- **The sugar plum fairies**
- **Pokémon card game**
- **Digital Cable**
- **Spring preview weather**
- **Chicago Bears off-season acquisitions**
- **Shoe leaving**
- **0STORY (Enix PS2 game)**
- **Too much X-Box speculation**
- **Old-school portable systems**
- **Artificial limbs**
- **Internet fraud**
- **Local phone charges**
- **Mail Boxes etc.**
- **15-hour plane rides**
- **Jet lag**
- **Vomit**
- **John Starks in a Bulls uniform**
- **Perfect Dark delays**
- **"Professional" wrestling**
- **Darryl Strawberry**
- **Who Wants to Marry a Millionaire**
- **A 20/20 special on the above**
- **Themed restaurants**

Pokémon Stadium



Publisher:	Nintendo
Developer:	Nintendo
Featured In:	*EGM* #120
Players:	1-4
Supports:	Transfer Pak
Best Feature:	See all your favorite Pokémon in 3D!
Worst Feature:	Battling is only part of Pokémon
Web Site:	www.nintendo.com

If you've never played the Pokémon Game Boy games, don't bother starting with Stadium. This is for Pokéfanatics only. And even though I would call myself a Pokémon fanatic, Stadium **gets boring pretty fast unless you're hardcore into linking up and battling with friends.** To me, Pokémon is much more than the battling. It's the RPG elements, the story and the world in which the Pokémon live. None of that is reflected here. Imagine playing Final Fantasy VIII, only take out the story and leave the battles. Its redeeming quality is that now you can see your favorite Pokémon in 3D, and they're really well-animated—it's like they're living, breathing anima.s. As far as sound goes, you'll find no aural pleasure here. Thankfully you can turn off the incredibly annoying announcer's voice. Aside from little chirps, the Pokémon themselves are complete.y silent. I can't understand why they didn't use sound effects from the TV show for each Pokémon. Being able to hook up four-player tournaments and play mini-games and browse the 3D Pokédex is nice, but it still doesn't make this any more of a complete game. It's great to see a Pokémon game in 3D, but I wish it was a true Pokémon game and not this (maybe on Dolphin). This game will sell millions no matter what I think, but this is a weekend rental at most. **Chris**

Pokémon fanatics have a new game to freak over. I think it's cool that now the monsters are in 3D and have really detailed animation, but at the same time, the battle system is extremely limited. Mini-games, being able to browse through your Pokémon, take their pictures, play the GB game on the big screen—these are nice diversions but there's no point to this game. **It's merely a game set within the world of the GB games.** But hey, who's listening to me? **Che**

You better know what you're getting into before you buy this game. Pokémon Stadium doesn't offer any of the RPG, training or monster-collecting elements of the Game Boy games. In fact, **there's not much game here** at all. You upload monsters. You watch them fight. You win tournaments. That's it. PS is just a pile of random perks for Pokémon fans. The critters look and animate beautifully. You get your own full-blown Pokédex. But it's just not enough. **Crispin**

WOW! I finally get to see my Pokémon in gorgeous 3D. The character animations and Pokémon attacks look amazing. Cool, I can play my Pokémon Game Boy games on my TV. Hmm, I blew through the battles pretty easily with my level 100 Blastoise. Well, it still looks like there are a lot of other things to do. That was quick, but I shouldn't expect much since there is really no story here. If all you like to do is battle, get it. Otherwise, rent first. **Dean**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	6	4	6

Alundra 2

Publisher:	Activision
Developer:	Matrix/Contrail
Featured In:	*EGM* #125
Players:	1
Supports:	Dual Shock, Analog
Best Feature:	Surprisingly decent voice acting
Worst Feature:	Poor control
Web Site:	www.activision.com

I was a big fan of the first Alundra. The story was interesting, the sprite-based graphics were beautiful, and the dungeons contained challenging, yet nonfrustrating puzzles. But as a sequel, Alundra 2 is disappointing in all three of those aspects. First, **it has very little to do with the first Alundra.** Instead of fighting in the dreams of others, the not-as interesting story of Alundra 2 features a more cartoon-like plot and setting, which takes a while to develop. Flint, the main protagonist, just isn't very interesting, nor is the main plot. You never feel any kind of attachment to the characters. Second, the graphic engine has made the switch to full 3D—not necessarily a bad thing—but the charm and appeal of the first game is lost in the transition. The control is ultra-loose, and it's too easy to accidentally run into enemies and take hits. Finally, the puzzles that made Alundra fun aren't nearly as challenging here. The game does have its good points. The voice acting is well done (performed by some of the same actors who voiced MGS) and there are plenty of interesting and useful power-ups. The music is also well composed and fits the lighthearted style of the game. But ultimately, there's nothing here that's new or innovative. As a 3D action-RPG, this game isn't too bad. As a sequel, Alundra 2 disappoints. **Chris**

Disappointing. That's the best way to describe this in-name-only sequel. The majority of the dungeon puzzles are uninspired, consisting mostly of standing on switches. Another problem is the collision detection, which is not nearly as tight as it should be. **You'll often find yourself fighting against the camera** while trying to avoid an enemy. Combine this with poor controls and you have yourself one average action-RPG. **Shoe**

This one started out slow, but it began to grow on me. Sure, it doesn't have anything to do with the first Alundra, but it's not bad as a stand-alone action-RPG. The camera was hard to negotiate at times, especially during the boss battles when it becomes fixed (no true analog control doesn't help matters either). But despite the problems, the interesting dungeons and colorful graphics make Alundra 2 worth checking out. **Shawn**

One wonders why they bothered to name it Alundra 2, instead of starting a new franchise. Almost nothing has carried over from its predecessor. Regardless of that, Alundra 2 is not a bad game at all. The story is somewhat interesting and the dungeons are laid out so that it offers a decent challenge. It's too bad the controls are unintuitive (why no full analog control?) and the collision detection is way off. **Not great, but not bad.** **Che**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	6	6	5

Countdown Vampires

Publisher:	Bandai
Developer:	K.2.C.
Featured In:	*EGM* #125
Players:	1
Supports:	Dual Shock
Best Feature:	Comical B-movie sound effects
Worst Feature:	Primitive controls
Web Site:	www.bandai.com

Survival horror games have come along way over the last few years and looking back at the original Resident Evil you can see that developers have learned their lesson since then. What a pity the Countdown Vampires team wasn't paying attention in class. **The game is full of classic no-nos and problems that make it infuriating to play.** Why do you have to press the Action button to move up and down stairs? Why is it so difficult to pick up items? Why is the Japanese to English translation so bad that sometimes things don't make any sense? Why does the camera angle shift so that I have no idea which way I'm facing any more? Why are the graphics so dark that I can't see what the frick is going on? How come I have to collect all items in the game except the mysterious 'white liquid' (which is never adequately explained) which I appear to have an infinite supply of? Is it some kind of perverse body fluid? The whole thing is overflowing with problems that detract from the experience. The story line is pathetic and derivative and the execution is appa.ling. Imagine a cross between Resident Evil and *From Dusk Til Dawn*—and you know what the developers were thinking. Even the puzzles are pathetic...they're even repeated in multiple places. Terrible, godawful, nasty. **John**

It's hard to make a good survival horror game when the bar is constantly being raised by those darn Resident Evil titles ("damn them!" I say, shaking my fist). Countdown Vampires isn't the worst of the RE clones I've seen (hmmm...Carrier), but there's not much that hasn't been done before here. **Since when do vampires limp casually along like zombies?** I like the whole idea of "saving" the infected vampires, but this is still only average. **Chris**

For a few minutes there, I thought I had gone insane. How else could I explain the nonsensical intro this game has? Whatever the case, this *From Dusk Til Dawn*-esque experience takes all of the things that make the games in the Resident Evil series so good and...well, it never had them to begin with. **The game has its share of problems.** Easy puzzles, chunky graphics and a silly story line are just a few of them. It's really not worth looking into. **Shawn**

Ever since I beat Code: Veronica this month, I can't seem to get enough of that stilted-but-fun style of gameplay started by Alone In The Dark. Still, there are games in the genre that cause me much grief to play. CV is about as generic as possible, minus the good looks of say...RE2. Come on! A "black water" that turns people into vampires? **This game is an insult to vampires everywhere.** The graphics are also grainy and dithered. Rental at best. **Che**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	5	3	3

Eagle One Harrier Attack

Publisher:	Infogrames
Developer:	Glass Ghost
Featured In:	*EGM* #126
Players:	1-2
Supports:	Dual Shock
Best Feature:	You get to fly a friggin' jumpjet!
Worst Feature:	Crap visuals
Web Site:	www.infogrames.net

No gettin' around it: Harrier jumpjets are slick flying machines. They dance in midair, can park on your roof—all that hover high jinks we saw in *True Lies*. So you'd think a Harrier game would be a sure thing, right? Sorry, but Eagle One: **Harrier Attack buys the farm big time**. Let's start with the visuals. First-generation PlayStation titles looked better than this thing. Terrain pops up in a tiled patchwork barely 300 feet in front of your jet, and you're nearly always peering into a disorienting soupy fog. It makes for an even worse two-player experience (you get a vs. mode as well as a few cooperative missions), since the fog's twice as bad in the cramped split screen. Eagle One's in desperate need of polish, too. You can fly a few different aircraft (including a helicopter and an A-10), but the engines all make the same sound and their HUD displays are identical. You never really get a sense of speed or altitude from the game; when you're sitting on the runway, for instance, it looks like you're 50 feet off the ground. You get 25 missions in all, but only a handful—the ones that take advantage of the Harrier's nimbleness—are any good. One, for instance has you hovering next to a damaged Harrier so its pilot can wingwalk to your cockpit. Clever, sure, but the game needs a lot more thrills like that to get me excited. **Crispin**

Crispin dislikes Eagle One more than I do, but I agree it needs work. The fog is most annoying, I can't stand that stupid effect. There's nothing worse than a short field of view. Still, **I can forgive it somewhat in light of the decent explosions and fire effects**. Sounds trite but that's the best part of a combat sim as far as I'm concerned. Second on my list of negatives is the clunky and less-than-intuitive control. Average is the best word to describe Eagle One. **Dean**

This game screams "first-generation rush job" to me. The graphics are fugly. The controls weren't that great. It's hard to hit those ugly, pixelated blobs they call "ground targets" without sitting perfectly still, which makes you a hovering sitting duck. And when you die, you have to start all over again (which isn't normally a deal for this type of game...but it's torture to have to replay Eagle One's stages over and over). This is too annoying to recommend. **Shoe**

Who thinks stuff like this will sell? At best, this game is for casual gamers who don't play flight sims often and want to mess around with the idea a little bit. At worst, **the game is rushed and shouldn't have been released for another couple of months.** Draw-in distance is like something from a first-generation game, and the graphics, control and sound just aren't polished. The two-player stuff needs major work, too. It'd be best to avoid this one. **Shawn**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
3	6	6	4

MediEvil 2

Publisher:	SCEA
Developer:	SCEE
Featured In:	*EGM* #127
Players:	1
Supports:	Dual Shock
Best Feature:	Clever gameplay bits
Worst Feature:	Control's a bit touchy
Web Site:	www.playstation.com

The first MediEvil was enjoyable, but didn't leave a lasting impression. And while the sequel suffers from some of the problems of the first, it's decidedly more enjoyable. True, you may not be able to tell the differences between the two from the get-go, but the further you get into it, the more apparent the changes become. The graphics have a more stylized, finished look to them compared to the first game, and there have been a good deal of new weapons added to Sir Dan's arsenal. Plus there's a bunch of new characters he can interact with and stuff he can do...especially like how you can pop his head onto a severed hand (like Thing) to get into small areas. The levels are designed quite nicely as well, and the puzzles are fun to work through. Remember how easy the bad-ass-looking bosses were from the first game? Well, they're a bit more difficult this time around, and still look about as cool. Now for the problems: Sadly, **the slightly jittery, stiff control is back from the first game** (which is particularly tricky near ledges and on platforms). And then there's the game's difficulty. Even in the first few levels, I found some of the regular enemies extremely hard to deal with (partly due to the control, partly due to the camera placement). Luckily, health rechargers are still scattered in one or two places per level. **Shawn**

This is a fine example of a decent action platform game for the PS. Tightly crafted, the only thing that's not so nice is the somewhat flighty control. I found it too easy with the analog to nearly run right off of ledges. Graphics-wise it looks great and moves smoothly. Think of it as **a macabre Spyro the Dragon.** But at a time when there's a lot of action platform games, this sequel doesn't offer anything new above the territory of the first game. **Chris**

If it wasn't for the unique gameplay added to MediEvil II—namely the DanHand, HeadlessDan and Dan-kenstein stuff—the game would be a rather lackluster sequel. Sure, the graphics may be a tad better and the levels may have more meat to them, but **there's still a lot of repetitive hacking and slashing.** And the touchy control and unrefined camera doesn't help with the overall experience. Still, it does provide some enjoyable entertainment. **Crispin**

Definitely one of the classier 3D action games out there for PlayStation, MediEvil 2 manages to take the concept of the original game and put an interesting Dickensian spin on the whole thing. Apart from this though, there's not much new. The controls are still a little awkward though, and there are some odd problems with the difficulty level. It is full of really cool ideas though which really add to the gameplay without ever seeming gimmicky. **John**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	7	6

NHL Rock the Rink

Publisher:	Electronic Arts
Developer:	Electronic Arts
Featured In:	*EGM* #128
Players:	1-2
Supports:	Dual Shock
Best Feature:	Lots of unlockables
Worst Feature:	It's fake hockey
Web Site:	www.easports.com

From the drop of the first puck I was intent on disliking Rock the Rink. I've seen plenty of arcade-style games that amuse me for 10 or 15 minutes, then I'm staring at the ceiling wondering how Hostess gets that white goo into the middle of Ding Dongs. But I was more than pleasantly surprised by the antics of Rock the Rink. **The game is fast, and skaters speed up and down the ice at a furious pace**. The game isn't timed; instead, the first team to a predetermined number of goals wins. That way you can't morph into Mr. Stall, like my brother's cruel friend who played Blades of Steel against me. As a true hockey fan, there was plenty for me to like. You'll be able to unlock NHL teams in the NHL challenge, and if you topple into the top 10 in different categories (shots in a game, hits in a game, etc.) you'll be awarded with cool features like "crazy shots" which means you can telekinetically (or with your controller) make shots curve and sway. The big checks are cool, too. You'll have a variety of big hits available, and the clutch and grab of this game is ruthless and purposeful. No penalties equals guillotine-attempting checks. I know most hockey fans will avoid this game at first, but playing is believing. It's easier to follow than EA's NHL 2000, and a lot more fun. Who doesn't want to see Chris Pronger in a metal-plated jersey? **Todd**

Rock the Rink is hockey with an NFL Blitz facelift. A small rink, huge players, and tons of special moves equal fast-paced end-to-end action. **The problem is, I can only do so many "corkscrew-tornado-whiplash" moves before I get bored.** There's not much depth. Granted, multiplayer is a pretty good time and makes the game worth a rental at least. For the friend-challenged gamer, EA included lots of goodies to unlock in single-player mode. **Dan L**

When it comes to hockey, I'd rather check my opponents and play like a maniac than track stats and trade players. Sims are fine, but RTR is more entertaining (in the same way NFL Blitz is for casual football fans). **Head-to-head battles are intense (and fun)** but because the frame-rate is so fast, the special moves are just plain silly. In my opinion, RTR isn't in the same league as Blitz (in the gonzo sports genre), but it's definitely worth a look. **Dean**

This was a bit of a surprise. **I'm not used to seeing good, over-the-top sports games from anyone but Midway.** EA satisfies by delivering a fast-paced, very easy-to-get-into hockey experience. Rock the Rink is more accessible than Blitz (no play calling to worry about), so it's great for the most casual of casual gamers. The game engine is decent, although it looks quite clunky compared to Midway's pigskin game for the same system. **Shoe**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	8	7

Sammy Sosa's High Heat Baseball 2001

Publisher:	3DO
Developer:	3DO
Featured In:	*EGM* #129
Players:	1-2
Supports:	Dual Shock
Best Feature:	Good AI
Worst Feature:	Clunky batting interface
Web Site:	www.3DO.com

So here I am getting ready to play High Heat 2001, and all I can think about is how bad the original PS version was. Still, other baseball sims have made great comebacks so I should be optimistic right? Well, all my positive thoughts were squashed once I dug into this improved, yet ultimately, average game. It's a shame, and I hate to dog the work of hardworking programmers, but why would anyone take a chance on this when there are many A-grade baseball sims for the PS already? If anything, HH 2001 has an easy learning curve which might be good for beginners but, again, why bother? Triple Play 2001 offers an equally easy curve plus plenty of arcade thrills. **The best thing HH 2001 has going for it is decent AI.** After that it's sketchy. Here are the problems in order: Batting is a lesson in frustration. You're given three options: high, low and mid swing. On top of that, you can't move your player around the box. This makes it tough to aim your hit. To add insult to injury, when playing the computer, it seems like it has little problem hitting off you. When it's your turn it's 1-2-3 you're out (it gets easier with time however). Where are the batting cursors? I won't even mention how goofy the player models look...oops, I just did. Hey, if you're still interested, there's a money-back guarantee if you don't like it. **Dean**

When I first played this game I was sold on its baseball accuracy. **I was convinced this was the game that finally sacrificed graphics for gameplay.** But the dream popped when I couldn't tell where the ball was going off the bat, my fielders sprayed a cloud of dust when diving in the grass, and the pitching interface was as annoying as it was ugly. It's a shame. But it looks like you can stick with EA's Triple Play and get equal gameplay and graphics to boot. **Todd**

Why Sammy Sosa would leave the cover of the respectable Triple Play series for this is a mystery. Maybe I've turned into a graphics whore, but I demand a little more than the Cro-Magnon-esque offerings of High Heat Baseball. Everything looks bad and the gameplay isn't much better. **Hitting and pitching, two essentials to the design of any good baseball game, are poorly executed.** Take a permanent seventh inning stretch on this one. **Dan L**

Look—**I don't care if a game is as realistic as hell or if it has a superstar's name attached to it.** If it looks as lame as this game does, I'm simply not going to care. Because it's my duty as a reviewer, I forced myself to drudge through High Heat's crappy animation and suspar graphics to find that there's a decent game underneath. But since you're not paid to do game reviews, I don't expect you to force yourself to do the same. And really, why should you? **Kraig**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
3	4	4	4

Micro Maniacs

Publisher:	Codemasters
Developer:	Codemasters
Featured In:	*EGM* #126
Players:	1-8
Supports:	Dual Shock, Multi-tap
Best Feature:	Simple gameplay
Worst Feature:	Eight-player mode (oddly)
Web Site:	www.codemasters.com

Take Micro Machines V3, take out the cars and put in weird-looking little people and hey, presto! Micro Maniacs. This is obviously an attempt to add some character to the franchise, but unfortunately the character design isn't striking enough to make you really care who it is you're playing as. When it comes to gameplay mechanics though, this is classic MM fare. The structure adheres to the tried and tested formula, but unfortunately, the additional demands of having animated characters running about instead of simple car shapes take their toll on the PlayStation. This is a much slower-paced game, but in some ways this helps. How? Well, there's now a much more structured weapons system for combat that involves collecting power-ups much like you would in Mario Kart. All the characters have two different types of ability which can be "charged" by collecting power-ups. You can save them up for a big whack in the final lap...or shoot your load early and chase after more of them. It makes for a more tactical game, especially in multiplayer mode. Speaking of which, **anything up to four players is great fun.** If you're lucky enough to own two multi-taps and have seven friends though, you'll find that the eight player game isn't as groovy as you'd think. Things get very confusing and people get bored. **John**

If you were never a fan of Codemasters' previous Micro Machines racing games, you're not gonna like this thing. But even if you did dig those addictive racers, you can live without Micro Maniacs anyway. Aside from new characters and levels, **there's not much new here**. It's still same top-down, chaotic gameplay. It's also just as fun. With four players it's a blast. With eight it's a party. Trouble is, you get the same thrills from Micro Machines V3. **Crispin**

The lovable party game just got a little less lovable. The Micro Machines games have always been great fun, but now, the series has pretty much run its course. Maniacs doesn't bring much new to the table (same gameplay, perspective and styles of tracks). The few new enhancements it does have are either no big whoop (jumping...big deal) or unwelcome (the new weapons are terribly unbalanced). It's still a fun disc. It's just a little disappointing. **Shoe**

Having never been a huge Micro Machines fan, I had serious doubts about Maniacs. And indeed, I found Micro Maniacs a bore in one-player. The **real fun picks up when you get a couple of your friends playing via the multi-tap** (beer optional). However, I found the character/weapon balance to be slightly off. There are some power-ups that really pissed me off. And of course, with more than six players, it's nigh impossible to see where you're going. **Che**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	6	8

Speed Punks

Publisher:	SCEA
Developer:	FunCom
Featured In:	*EGM* #129
Players:	1
Supports:	Dual Shock
Best Feature:	Long courses, nice graphics
Worst Feature:	Weak cast of characters
Web Site:	www.foxinteractive.com

You might ask: "With Crash Team Racing on the market, do I really need another cartoony racing game?" Well...maybe, since **Speed Punks doesn't have the same kind of depth Crash Team Racing has**—which is fine if you're in that sort of mood. Speed Punks is all about good old-fashioned power-up-filled (some nice ones by the way) cart racing, without any of the adventurey stuff attached. It's nice to be able to sit down and simply race, without having to search around for different stuff. All I need to do is pick up a couple of power-ups and come in first place. I didn't even need to power slide very much. Easy enough. I suppose when I want something more, I'll throw in CTR. Don't get me wrong, Speed Punks is a lot of fun. Instead of Crash Bandicoot critters, the game's filled with bratty kids (well, except for some of the hidden characters you open up anyway). The variety of courses the game offers is huge and beautifully detailed, and carts have natural control and physics (although, I could see the control being a little strange for people used to CTR's style). And even with all of this stuff going on, the game remains very fast throughout the one-player mode. And actually, the two- and four-player modes have very acceptable frame-rates as well. No doubt, you'll also have fun with the bonus stuff you can open up. **Shawn**

Crash Bandicoot Racing set the benchmark for this type of mini-cart racing game last year. Is this better? No. But for what it is, Speed Punks is a fun diversion. Better than the Chocobo Racing and Bomberman Fantasy Races of the PS racing world, that's for sure. I dig the fact that it's four-player and that you can **see the initials of the people in front of you over their heads.** Why didn't I think of that? Only problem is if you hit something, you're screwed. **Chris**

I don't usually get into cute racing games but Speed Punks is fun in a simplistic way. **The sensation of speed and the nimble power-sliding is what won me over**. The tracks are not overly long and confusing either (remember, simplicity). Power-ups are well placed, the speed boosts are effective, and the weapons work well. To top it off, multiplayer is quite functional for both two- and four-player modes. I highly recommend SP for younger players. **Dean**

Unfortunately for this little racer, it's not the first PS kart game to the market. And **since it's not better than CTR, I find little reason to recommend it.** The tracks aren't imaginative, the weapons aren't original and the graphics are only so-so. The four-player game is fine (no complaints, nothing to write home about). Speed Punks would've scored higher if spin-outs didn't flip you so far around—it takes freakin' forever to get back on the right track! **Shoe**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	5	7

Street Sk8er 2

Publisher:	Electronic Arts
Developer:	Micro Cabin
Featured In:	*EGM* #127
Players:	1-2
Supports:	Dual Shock
Best Feature:	Visuals
Worst Feature:	Unintuitive Control
Web Site:	www.ea.com

Even though Street Sk8er 2 may look, sound and even feel a little like Tony Hawk's Pro Skater, it isn't going to be the next big thing in the world of skateboarding games. At best, it'll be filed under the "rent once but never buy" category. **After playing THPS, the semi-arcadey Street Sk8er 2 just doesn't seem worth the time or money.** While the graphics are admittedly more crisp (except for the undetailed skaters) and sometimes speedier than THPS, the control is terribly sluggish. This makes pulling off tricks – and especially combos—more trouble than they're worth. This is really unfortunate, considering the levels are long and jam-packed with rails, ramps and objects to use for tricks. The Skate Park Editor is fun to mess with as well. And while I like how you can upgrade your skater's stats, and open up different stuff as you advance, all in all, the skaters are stereotypical and lame, and there aren't enough courses to choose from. So what about the two-player stuff? Well, it doesn't hold a candle to the kick-ass modes in THPS. A box collection mode is a mindless game of tag, and the trick duel is annoying thanks to the aforementioned control problems. And finally, do we really need to hear some "hipster" announcer telling me how much I tore up a course, or asking if I meant to bail on that last trick? I don't think so. **Shawn**

I wouldn't put SS2 above Tony Hawk, but it'll give Thrasher: Skate and Destroy a run for its money. The trick system while ultra-simple, is more intuitive than Thrasher. **You'll be doing just about everything there is within the first hour of play.** That's nice, but unfortunately the animation looks robotic and stiff. It'd be more realistic if subtle nuances were thrown in here and there. Instead you see the exact same motion repeated over and over again. **Dean**

If you've already played Tony Hawk's Pro Skater, don't even bother with Street Sk8er 2. **It rips ideas from Activision's superior skating game** while also managing to look and feel clunky. Although it packs loads of moves, the tricks system just doesn't feel natural. Your skater appears sluggish, particularly when he or she gets air; it's like you're skating underwater. The park-editor, although a nice touch, doesn't give you enough options. **Crispin**

Tony Hawk has blown open the genre floodgates for mediocre knockoffs. SS2 is a huge improvement over its predecessor, but it still lacks the controls that make THPS the standard by which all other skating games are judged. And to EA's credit, they've embellished the game with plenty of authentic branding and some decent music. But why the uber-annoying "xtreme" announcer dude? SS2 is painfully ordinary...**I'd pick up THPS and Thrasher first.** **Che**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	4	5

Triple Play 2001

Publisher:	Electronic Arts
Developer:	Treyarch
Featured In:	*EGM* #128
Players:	1-2
Supports:	Dual Shock
Best Feature:	Amazing depth
Worst Feature:	Magic Carpet remix
Web Site:	www.easports.com

To sports fans, baseball is bigger than the action on the diamond, it is a universe unto its own. PlayStation baseball games have always been able to deliver one piece or another of that universe, but never has one delivered it as completely as Triple Play 2001. Whether you want to dive into baseball's past by playing with 20 of the all-time greats (such as Babe Ruth and Hank Aaron) or play a quirky off-shoot of what might be the future with the Extreme Home Run challenge, there's something in Triple Play 2001 that will appeal to every level of fan. Topping off all its features is a well thought-out rewards system (similar to Madden 2000's Madden Challenge) that unlocks new codes when you compile gaudy stats, giving you all the more reason to perfect your game and pile it on. The game itself excels in just about every way: The presentation is superb, thanks to some great visuals, fast-paced action, and good-humored quips from the colorful commentators, while the gameplay moves along at just the right pace. While there are some occasional lapses in Triple Play's realism that result in fielding errors and an occasional pitch that will make you shake your head in disbelief, **EA Sports has created the best console baseball game out there** in terms of gameplay and overall package by far. **Kraig**

Ever since the World Series Baseball days of the Genesis, I've scorned all baseball games which fail to use some kind of cursor/batter's box interface. **Hitting in Triple Play 2001 is more guesswork and less of a "real" experience.** Pitching also suffers a bit, as it seems you throw to a general area rather than spotting your pitch. TP 2001 is more of an arcade-style slugfest and should not be played by sim-nuts like myself. **Dan L**

Folks, the great power pitchers in the wonderful game of baseball do not throw 106 mph fastballs. And on bloop singles over the first baseman's head, the right fielder does not become a spectator. If you're up for a sim-style baseball game, don't waste your time on this duo. Triple Play 2001 might wow some with their graphics, but outside of hitting home runs with the icons from baseball's past, **this game can stay in the box 'til PS2 comes to town.** **Todd**

I'm a big fan of this game, but I have to admit the pitching is not as accurate as I'd like. **I had a tough time placing the ball exactly where I wanted it.** That's the main gripe, I'm pleased with everything else. The Big League Challenge and new Legend players are definitely cool additions. On top of that, the graphic detail both in the players and the stadiums has improved a lot. OK, just one more complaint, at times it seems just a hair choppy... **Dean**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	7	6

Vanark

Publisher:	Jaleco
Developer:	Asmik Ace Entertainment
Featured In:	*EGM* #129
Players:	1
Supports:	Dual Shock
Best Feature:	It's Star Fox for PlayStation
Worst Feature:	Redundant story line
Web Site:	www.jaleco.com

If you've ever had a hankering for something that's basically Star Fox on the PlayStation...then this is going to be the game for you. Despite being a shameless rip-off of the Nintendo classic, Asmik Ace has done a remarkable job of producing an "on-rails" 3D shooter that feels remarkably open and exciting. All of the visuals are generated in real time (just like Star Fox) and in places they can be very impressive. Unfortunately, the game is let down by some unnecessary trimmings that slow the pace down somewhat. Between the relatively brief shooting levels you are forced to work your way through a plodding, cliché-ridden "story" that is presented in the same manner as an RPG. Ten out of 10 for a nice idea, but in execution it's not all that great. The fact that the Japanese to English translation is one of the worst I've ever seen doesn't really help either. I just want to get into the thick of things and shoot stuff...because that's where this game excels. Sure, the plant/fish/robot/phallus hybrid enemies are a bit naff, but the mindless blasting is a refreshing change from the majority of PlayStation games around at the moment. Vanark may be derivative, but it's welcome fun and it was clearly put together by a team that really loves their 3D shooters. It won't take you long to finish, but it's worth a rental. **John**

Vanark has some excellent gameplay very reminiscent of games like Gamera 2000, Raystorm or Panzer Dragoon. Where it falls flat is that in between it, you have boring bits of moving around the ship trying to find out what to do next. There's **too much walking around talking to people and not enough shooting.** Just gimme a quick update from the cockpit, tell me what I'm doing in the next mission and I'm off. None of this wandering business. **Chris**

I'm sure you've heard, **the action portion of Vanark is basically a cross between Star Fox and Panzer Dragoon.** Despite the obvious lack of originality, it's not really that bad. Or, I should say, the combat isn't that bad. The corny, RPG-like story is a waste of time and energy. I can't see people who are into shooters wanting to play out this, the more boring aspect of Vanark. I'm gonna cop-out on this one and just recommend a rental. **Dean**

Vanark is best summed up as **Star Fox meets Panzer Dragoon meets Resident Evil.** It's a fast-paced 3D shooter sporting some truly generous visuals. Even during some of the huge boss scenes (their biomechanical look reminds me of Darius), there's no hint of slowdown anywhere. Unfortunately, Vanark forces you to run around survivor horror style in-between levels to move its flaccid story along. Why couldn't they just have used FMV? Boggles the mind. **Che**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	7	5	5

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Blaster Master

Publisher:	Sunsoft
Developer:	Sunsoft
Featured In:	*EGM* #128
Players:	1
Supports:	None
Best Feature:	Classic side-scrollin' action
Worst Feature:	Passwords instead of game saves
Web Site:	None

Back in the day (1988 to be exact), a lil' game called Blaster Master came out and it was the talk of the school yard. I must've rented this game a half dozen times, never actually beating it but totally enjoying it. Now I realize how ridiculous the idea of a boy and his pet frog being mutated into a super-mechanized attack force really is, but the game's still darn fun. This brings the feeling of playing the original to Game Boy Color. It's not exactly the NES game, but it's damn close. Graphically, it's **one of the better GBC games I've seen that holds up well next to Nintendo's own** NES ports. Sound effects, too, are straight out of the original home game. The control feels a little tighter than the NES game. The mix of side-scrolling with top-down gameplay makes it feel like a real adventure and mixes it up so things don't get too monotonous. Unlike another 8-Bit port like Super Mario Bros. or Bionic Commando, you can't look up or down so that limits the field of view. Sometimes that can mean you'll fall off into a pit that you weren't able to see because it was out of view. Unfortunately, it uses a password save system instead of the more convenient (especially for portable games) battery back-up. Imagine not having a piece of paper handy to write down a password when you're at the last boss.

Chris

Thank god the wave of quality NES games going Game Boy Color is continuing. I enjoyed the NES original even though I'm not usually big on side-scrolling action games. Some things have been changed to make it a bit easier—enemies moved, frustrating bits taken out—but that just makes it a better, balanced game. It's too bad you have to use passwords. **Considering the quality of the rest of the GBC catalog, this is a good choice.**

Crispin

I like the trend of porting NES classics to the GBC. It's a great platform to revisit great side-scrollers from the bygone 8-Bit days. Blaster Master, for those who don't know, is a scrolling shooter featuring a tank-drivin' hero lost in a subterranean world. Jump around, shoot simple enemies, figure out how to get to the next level...it's a nice change of pace to play a game with simple objectives. **It's a fine translation** so fans of the original should be psyched.

Dean

This is exactly the kind of game that used to annoy the hell out of me on the NES. It's a platform game with a tank...now why would a tank be jumping about? It's full to overflowing with those old-school gaming clichés like "Ooh, how do I get past this wall?" or "Deary me, that enemy is one micron shorter than the height at which my gun fires, what to do?" Years ago this would've been fine, but I could happily live if I never saw BM ever again.

John

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	5	4

Faselei!

Publisher:	SNK
Developer:	Sacnoth
Featured In:	*EGM* #129
Players:	1-2
Supports:	Link cable
Best Feature:	Gameplay and character designs
Worst Feature:	Interface could have been refined
Web Site:	www.snkusa.com

Being the resident "mech freak" on the Review Crew, Faselei! has intrigued me ever since it was announced. I mean, what more could I ask for than a portable Front Mission on my favorite handheld system? And in that respect, Faselei! certainly doesn't disappoint. It's got all the right ingredients of a great SRPG: a rich roster of NPCs that weave in and out of the story, a solid strategy engine, and lots of customizing options. To keep things from seeming too derivative, Sacnoth implemented a unique strategy engine dubbed "TIPS" (Tactical Intelligence Programming System). With TIPS, you "program" your mech with up to five "actions" per turn, then you hit go and sit back to witness the carnage. It's kind of like LOGO for the Apple II, um...only it's not. Like Vandal Hearts 2, this simultaneous movement and prediction system takes some getting used to, but after a while, you'll be just as hooked as I was. **For about a week straight, Faselei! hardly left my side.** But for as much as I enjoyed the game, there could've been improvements. The battle interface can be cumbersome, and the map areas feel claustrophobic. Also, despite the cool story, there's plenty of stale dialogue and "mercenary-with-a-golden-heart" clichés. Niggling flaws, to be sure, because overall, Faselei! is a fine pocket game.

Che

I never thought a strategy game would translate well to a portable system—until I played Faselei!. Despite some clunkiness, the control and battle systems are both deep and easy to wrangle. You get a surprising amount of mech customization options. Even the graphics are decent. Sure, if you're not into strategy games on the regular console systems, this thing won't sell you on the genre. But **if you're a Front Mission-kinda guy, buy this now.**

Crispin

It's really nice to see Tactics-style strategy games straying off the traditional and beaten lands-of-fantasy-and-magic path. It's especially nice to get some of this goodness on a portable system. Besides just being in a cool genre that you can play on the go, **Faselei! offers up very solid gameplay with a cool story line and fun battle system.** Warning: if you didn't dig Vandal Heart II's simultaneous move method, you're really gonna hate this game.

Shoe

To the extent that Faselei! reminds me of Front Mission scores high points with me. It just amazes me that handheld games have progressed past the action game genre, and have come into their own with deep genres like the SRPG. **My only gripe with Faselei! is the actual battle engine itself.** Why couldn't Sacnoth just stick with the traditional turn-based gameplay? I'm lukewarm on TIPS, but the game is a godsend for the NGPC

Chris

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	8	8	6

Metal Slug: 2nd Mission

Publisher:	SNK
Developer:	Sacnoth
Featured In:	*EGM* #129
Players:	1
Supports:	None
Best Feature:	Lots of variety
Worst Feature:	Some confusing level layouts
Web Site:	www.snkusa.com

The sprite-heavy Contra wanna-be plays really nicely on SNK's baby system. A little slowdown aside (only when the screen is cluttered with enemies), the game runs really smoothly. The controls are spot-on as well—you won't be able to blame them if anything goes wrong. Most of the action is standard 2D shooter fare, with you having to mow down weak bad guy after weak bad guy, until the stage culminates in a battle with some sort of huge boss unit who has a weak spot or two. But **where Metal Slug: 2nd Mission succeeds is the variety of gameplay.** On some stages, for example, you'll be able to drive a tank or a submarine. Even cooler, you'll get to play levels where your only weapon is a combat knife (so you'll have to get close and personal with your enemies). The best gameplay element, and perhaps the one factor that will keep you coming back for more and more, is the hostage rescuing bit. The rag-tag P.O.W.s all have names now, and you have a Pokédex-style "Rescue List" to fill out. Since some are cleverly hidden, you're driven to...anem... "collect them a..." It's certainly a refreshing twist on a veteran genre. My biggest complaint with the game is that some of the levels are a little troublesome to figure out. They don't scroll in just one direction and are spread out all over the place.

Shoe

I've played Metal Slug before in the arcade and on the PlayStation, and this mini-version stands up well to those. For a classic-style action game, this has **plenty of eye candy and variety in gameplay.** Keeps the replay value fairly high so that you're not done with the game until you've rescued all the hostages. Slowdown is a bit of a concern, but the graphics and animation are so nice you don't notice it as much. It's got speech, too.

Chris

I thought that the first Metal Slug translated to the NGPC extremely well **and Mission picks up right where the first one left off**, with more of the same twists on the classic arcade gameplay. Part of what makes Metal Slug so endearing to me is the art direction as well as the miniscule hand-drawn details on the sprites—and 2nd Mission's improved graphics and animation really capture that look. If it's a shoot-'em-up you want, this game delivers.

Che

I really enjoyed the last Metal Slug on NGPC, and while the sequel isn't groundbreaking, it's certainly one of the best scrolling blasters I've played on a handheld. The graphics are great (in an old-school NES kinda way) and **the gameplay is sufficiently varied to keep you hooked.** It's more than just shooting too. As Shoe said, there's a real incentive to work your way through the game methodically to get the hostages. *Another* cool NGPC game.

John

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	6	7

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Gold
Silver

Review Archive

EGM's Last 101 Reviews From EGM #126 – 129

Game	Publisher	Best Feature	Worst Feature	Scores				Issue #
Armada	Metro3D	Plays Like An Action-RPG	Gameplay Gets Repetitive	6.5	6.0	6.0	5.0	127
Carrier	Jaleco	Nice Clean Graphics	Slowdown And Sluggish Control	6.5	5.5	4.0	6.5	129
Chu Chu Rocket	Sega	This Is One Kick-Ass Party Game	Internet Play Not Perfect	9.5	9.5	8.5	9.5	129
Crazy Taxi	Sega	Excellent Arcade-Style Gameplay	Not Much To Open Up	9.5	9.0	9.0	9.0	128
Elemental Gimmick Gear	Vatical	Colorful Graphics	Tough Overworld Enemies	7.5	5.5	6.5	6.0	128
F-1 World Grand Prix	Sega	Gorgeous Graphics	Over-sensitive Controls	8.5	7.0	7.5	6.5	127
Fighting Force 2	Eidos	Nice Visuals	Dull, Repetitive Gameplay	4.0	5.0	2.5	2.0	128
Giga Wing	Capcom	It's A 2D Shooter!	You'll Go Mad From Sprite Overdose	6.5	6.0	7.5	4.5	129
Gundam Side Story 0079	Bandai	Graphics And Presentation	Gameplay Can Be Frustrating	7.5	7.5	7.0	8.0	128
Incoming	Interplay	Yummy Graphics	Everything But The Yummy Graphics	3.0	3.0	3.5	5.0	127
JoJo's Bizarre Adventure	Capcom	Graphics, Design, Gameplay	Well, It's Censored, But Just A Little	8.5	8.0	6.0	8.0	128
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver	Eidos	Amazing Visuals	Anti-Climactic Ending	9.5	8.0	9.0	9.0	128
NBA Showtime	Midway	This Is The Best Console Version	No Extras! It's A Straight Port	8.5				127
NFL Quarterback Club	Acclaim	Graphics	Uh, Where Do We Begin...	3.0	2.0	2.0	3.0	127
NHL 2K	Sega	Realistic Skating	Goalies May Be Too Good	9.5	8.5	9.0	9.0	129
Plasma Sword	Capcom	Frantic, Easy To Get Into Gameplay	Underwhelming Graphics, No Depth	7.0	6.0	4.5	8.0	128
Re-Volt Racing	Acclaim	Decent Frame-Rate	Confusing Track Layouts	6.0				127
Sega Rally 2	Sega	Better Than The Arcade Game	Only Two-Player Multiplay	9.5	9.0	9.0	9.0	126
Shadow Man	Acclaim	Graphical Additions	Hard-To-Follow Game Progression	8.0				127
Soul Fighter	Red Orb	Gorgeous Environments	Too Many To List Here!	2.0	4.5	2.5	3.5	127
South Park: Chef's Luv Shack	Acclaim	Crisp Graphics	Terrible Disc Access Problems	5.0	4.5	5.5	4.0	127
Street Fighter Alpha 3	Capcom	Fast Load Times, Animations Intact	No Internet Mode	9.0				129
Swirl	Sega	It's So Simple And It's Free!	The "Just One More Game" Syndrome	8.0				129
Tee Off Golf	Acclaim	Graphics Are Just OK	Useless Camera Angles	4.0	4.5	5.0	6.0	129
Test Drive 6	Infogrames	The Soundtrack	The Cars, The Tracks, The Gameplay	3.0	4.0	4.0	5.5	127
Vigilante 8: Second Offense	Activision	Awesome Frame-Rate	Collision Detection With Objects	8.5	8.0	7.0	8.0	127
Virtua Striker 2	Sega	Gorgeous Visuals	Atrocious Controls	3.5	4.0	4.0	4.5	129
Wild Metal	Rockstar	Graphics	Tedious	5.0	6.0	6.5	4.0	128
Zombie Revenge	Sega	Limited Continues, Great Visuals	Fighting Mode	9.0	8.0	6.5	8.5	127
Nintendo 64								
Armorines Project S.W.A.R.M.	Acclaim	Blastin' Hordes Of Bugs	No Checkpoints, Poor Frame-Rate	5.0	4.5	6.0	3.0	127
Brunswick Pro Circuit	THQ	Bowling Physics	Very Dull Aesthetics	7.0				127
Castlevania Legacy of Darkness	Konami	The Few New Areas	All The Old Areas	7.5	7.0	7.0	7.5	127
Donkey Kong 64	Nintendo	Fun Mini-Games, Puzzles	Long Stretches Of Monotony	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.0	127
Earthworm Jim 3D	Rockstar	Cow Humor!	Bad Camera, Monotonous Gameplay	3.0	5.5	5.5	6.0	126
ECW: Hardcore Revolution	Acclaim	Getting To Play As The ECW Cast	It Plays/Feels Just Like WWF Attitude	6.5	7.5	5.0	8.0	128
Harvest Moon 64	Natsume	Open-Ended, Non-Linear Gameplay	Monotonous Farming Chores	8.0	7.0	8.0	7.5	126
Hydro Thunder	Midway	Near Arcade-Perfect Gameplay	Some Slowdown, Weak Two-Player	7.0				129
Lego Racers	Lego Media	Slap Together Your Own Lego Cars	Needs More Multiplayer Stuff	6.5	7.0	4.0	7.5	126
Mario Party 2	Nintendo	New Styles Of Games	Too Many Returning Mini-Games	7.5	8.0	8.5	9.0	127
Namco Museum 64	Namco	Ms. Pac-Man, Galaga...For Cheap!	Games Still Aren't Arcade Perfect	8.0	6.0	7.5	6.5	127
NBA Courtside 2	Nintendo	Extensive Amount Of Special Moves	Could Be A Touch Faster	9.0	7.5	8.0	8.5	127
NBA: In the Zone 2000	Konami	Dunk Contest	Sloppy Frame-Rate	5.0				126
NBA Jam 2000	Acclaim Sports	Jam And Sim All In One	Too Easy To Get Dunkadelic	7.0	5.0	2.0	6.0	126
Ridge Racer 64	Nintendo	It's Ridge Racer On The N64	Jittery Graphics	8.0	8.0	7.5	8.5	127
Roadsters	Titus	Decent Graphics And Frame-Rate	This Game Is Painfully Generic	4.5	3.5	3.0	4.5	127
South Park Rally	Acclaim	Um...Not Sure It Has One	Badly Scripted "Humor"	2.0	4.0	3.0	3.0	128
Tarzan	Activision	Rich-Looking Visuals	Kiddie Gameplay	6.5				129
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater	Activision	Linkable Combo Tricks	Troublesome N64 Pad	9.0	9.0	7.0	8.5	129
Top Gear Hyperbikes	Kemco	Nice Speed, Graphics	Not Much Beyond Visuals	6.0	7.5	5.0	7.0	126
Top Gear Rally 2	Kemco	Unique Upgrade Options	Frequent Breakdowns	5.5	4.0	3.5	5.5	127
Turok: Rage Wars	Acclaim	Multiplayer Fragging!	Tedious Way Of Opening Up Extras	6.0	7.0	6.5	6.5	126

	Game	Publisher	Best Feature	Worst Feature	Scores				Issue #
PlayStation									
	Ace Combat 3	Namco	Slick Visuals	Weak Story	5.5	7.0	5.5	6.0	129
	Armored Core: MoA	Agetec	Good Multiplayer Support	Dated Graphics, Rehashed Engine	5.5				129
	Chocobo's Dungeon 2	Square Electronic Arts	Item Combination System	Lack Of Story, Mediocre Graphics	7.0	6.0	7.5	3.5	127
	Colin McRae Rally	SCEA	Excellent Rally "Feel"	Controls A Bit Too Light	9.0	8.0	6.5	7.5	128
	Colony Wars: Red Sun	Psygnosis	Mission Variety	Stoopid Enemies	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	129
	Crusaders of Might & Magic	300	Character-Development System	Lame Story	3.0	2.5	3.0	4.0	128
	Deception 3: Dark Delusion	Tecmo	Making Traps, Finding New Combos	Disjointed English Text	8.0	7.5	7.0	7.5	129
	Die Hard Trilogy 2	Fox Interactive	Shooting Style Of Play	Third-Person Action Mode	6.5	6.0	5.5	6.5	129
	Dukes of Hazzard, The	South Peak Interactive	Speedy Frame-Rate	Bad Control And Low Replay Value	4.5				128
	Fatal Fury: Wild Ambition	SNK	It Has A Solid Game Engine But...	...It's Not As Good As The 2D Games	6.5	3.5	5.0	6.5	128
	Fear Effect	Eidos	Good Lord...The Story And Atmosphere!	Controls, Boss Battles	9.5	8.5	9.0	9.0	129
	Fighting Force 2	Eidos	Decent Graphics And Frame-Rate	No Save Points During Long Levels	2.5	5.0	4.5	5.0	127
	Front Mission 3	Square EA	Mature Story, Deep Gameplay	Graphics Are A Bit Outdated	9.5	8.5	9.0	9.0	129
	Gran Turismo 2	SCEA	Incredible Realism	Not Enough Hours In The Day	10	10	10	10	127
	Hot Shots Golf 2	SCEA	Great Golf Physics	Not Enough Taunts :)	9.5	9.0	8.5	8.5	129
	Jackie Chan Stuntmaster	Midway	Train Stages	Ridiculous Load Time After You Die	5.0	5.5	6.5	6.5	127
	March Madness 2000	EA Sports	Dicky V, Baby!	No Analog Control	9.0	8.0	8.0	8.5	127
	Marvel vs. Capcom	Capcom	Super Cancels, Decent Animation	No Tagging, Only One Run-In Partner	6.5				128
	Medal of Honor	Electronic Arts	Killing Nazis	It's Too Short	9.0	9.0	8.5	9.5	126
	Misadventures of Tron Bonne	Capcom	Cartoony Graphics, Lotsa Fun	A Little On The Short Side	8.0	5.0	6.5	7.5	129
	MTV Music Generator	Codemasters	You Can Make Music!	Fiddly Controls With A Joypad	9.5	8.0	8.5	8.0	126
	NASCAR Rumble	Electronic Arts	Lots Of Substance	Corny Commentary	7.5	6.5	8.0	7.0	129
	NBA Live 2000	EA Sports	Great AI	The New York Knicks	8.5	9.0	9.0	7.5	126
	NBA ShootOut 2000	989 Sports	Adjustable Stuff	Too Many Steals	7.5	6.0	5.5	5.0	128
	Road Rash: Jail Break	Electronic Arts	Good Speed	Chunky 3D Graphics	7.5	8.0	6.5	6.0	128
	Rollcage Stage 2	Psygnosis	All The Extra Stuff You Can Open	A Tad On The Easy Side	8.0				129
	SaGa Frontier 2	Square EA	Graphics And Story	High Learning Curve And Difficulty	8.0	8.5	7.5	7.5	128
	Silent Bomber	Bandai	Fast-Paced Action	Gets A Little Repetitious	7.5	7.5	7.5	8.0	128
	Silhouette Mirage	Working Designs	Gameplay, Added Analog Support	Repetitive, Obnoxious Voices	8.0	8.5	8.0	7.5	127
	SuperCross 2000	Electronic Arts	Real Bikes And Riders	Overly Realistic Handling	5.0	3.5	4.5	4.5	127
	Syphon Filter 2	989 Studios	You Can Now Save At Checkpoints	Frustrating Levels, Poor Multiplayer	5.5	6.0	5.5	6.0	129
	Thrasher: Skate and Destroy	Rockstar Games	Realism, Soundtrack	Unintuitive Controls, Bland Graphics	7.0	6.5	7.0	6.5	127
	Tombal 2: The Evil Swine Return	SCEA	Tons Of Stuff To Do	Bosses Are Way Too Easy	8.0	8.0	8.0	7.5	127
	Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation	Eidos	More Exploration; Less Combat	Boring Backtracking In Many Levels	5.5	4.0	7.0	4.0	127
	Warpath: Jurassic Park	Electronic Arts	Graphics	It Gets Boring Fast	5.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	127
	Worms Armageddon	Hasbro Interactive	Tons Of Options, Multiplayer	Painfully Slow CPU AI	9.5	9.5	9.0	9.0	126
	WWF SmackDown!	THQ	This Is The Best Wrestling Engine Yet	Matches Take Too Long	9.0	8.5	9.0	8.5	129
Game Boy/Game Boy Color									
	Bionic Commando	Nintendo/Capcom	Old-School Gameplay To The Max	That It Didn't Happen Sooner	9.0	7.5	7.5	7.0	129
	Dragon Warrior Monsters	Eidos	Random Areas, Never The Same Twice	Not Much Of A Story	8.0	7.0	7.5	8.0	128
	Game and Watch Gallery 3	Nintendo	Mindless Fun	It Gets Repetitive	8.0				127
	Ghosts 'N Goblins	Capcom	Old-School Feel	It's Tedious In Parts	7.0				129
	NHL 2000	THQ	Decent Hockey On The GBC!	Questionable AI	7.0				128
	Rainbow Six	Red Storm	Captures Story Of PC Game	Too Slow-Paced	6.0	4.5	4.5	4.0	129
	Rayman	Ubi Soft	Old-School Feel	It's Tedious In Parts	5.5				128
	Star Wars: Episode I Racer	Nintendo	Lots Of Tracks	Only Face One Opponent At A Time	7.0				127
	Worms Armageddon	Infogrames	Hmmm...It's Portable?	It's Seriously Disappointing	2.0				129
Neo•Geo Pocket Color									
	Cardfighter's Clash: SNK vs. Capcom	SNK	Addicting Gameplay	Deck Management	8.5	6.5	8.0	9.0	127
	Gals Fighters	SNK	All Of SNK's Women In One Game	AI Wakes Up When They're Low On Life	9.0	9.0	9.0	6.5	129
	Match of the Millennium: SNK vs. Capcom	SNK	Graphics, Gameplay	Only Two Buttons	9.0	9.0	9.0	8.0	127
	Sonic Pocket Adventure	SNK	Sonic Speed	Rings Go Through Walls When Hit	8.5	9.0	7.5	8.0	127

Tricks of the Trade

By Trickman Terry
tricks@zd.com

TRICK OF THE MONTH

Resident Evil 2

(For the N64)
Invincibility and Unlimited Ammo

On the Title/Main Menu Screen, highlight and choose the Load Game option. On the Saved Games Screen, enter the following button sequences for the results as shown:

Invincibility

Enter Down, Down, Down, Down, Left, Left, Left, Left, L button, R button, R button, L button, Up-C, Down-C. Once you enter the code correctly, you will be taken back to the previous screen. From here you can choose to begin a new game or load a saved one. You are now invulnerable from all attacks!

Unlimited Ammo

On the Saved Games Screen, enter Up, Up, Up, Up, Right, Right, Right, Right, L button, R button, L button, R button, Right-C, Left-C. Once you enter the code correctly, you will be taken back to the previous screen. From here you can choose to begin a new game or load a saved one. Your ammunition will go down to zero, but you can keep firing and it will never run out!

Christian Rodger
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

DREAMCAST

Crazy Taxi

Change Fare Locations, Show Speedometer, Change Views

1 **Another Day**
At the Driver Selection Screen, press R-Trigger, then press and hold R-Trigger. While holding it, choose a driver. The words "Another Day" will appear in the lower left. The game will be switched around with fares in different places than usual.

For these next tricks, you need a controller plugged into port 3. Begin in Arcade or Original mode. Now use the buttons on controller 3 to access these tricks as shown.

Speedometer
Hit X five times to show your speed in the lower right.

Change the View
Switch views in the game.

2 **Alternate (replay) Angle** = Y
Back to the Normal View = A

3 **First-Person View** = B

NHL 2K

Player Pics and Messages

From the New Game Menu, Choose either Exhibition, Season or Playoff. Go to Custom Players and change the first and last names of your player to one of the names shown below. Once you do this, press A to accept the player. Back at the New Game Menu, go to Trade Players and on the Roster Manager Screen, choose the Free Agents pool. Scroll through the players until you see the one you created. Now press A to select the player and X to execute the trade. Press A again to accept this trade agreement. Go back to the New Game Menu once more and select Edit Lines. In this menu, move over to the players (either on the ice or scratched) and you will see the faces or message for the players you created:

1 **Tony Twist** - Put in this name for his picture to appear when you highlight him on the Edit Lines Screen.
Ron Hextall - Enter this name for his picture to appear when you highlight him on the Edit Lines Screen.
Marty Reasoner - Put in this name for his picture to appear when you highlight him on the Edit Lines Screen.

2 **Wayne Gretzky** - Enter this name to see the text, "Thanks for the Memories" over the head shot on the Edit Lines Screen.

Zombie Revenge

Fighting Mode, Costume Change

1 **Fighting Mode Stage Select**
From the Title Screen, choose the Fighting Mode option. At the Fighting Mode screen, press and hold Start. While holding Start, choose an option with the A button. The Stage Select Screen will appear where you can choose between seven different stages.

2 **Costume Change**
On the Character Select Screen, highlight a character and hold Start. While holding Start, press the X, Y or B buttons for a new costume.

Kevin Johnson
Pensacola, FL

HEY, YOU: WANNA WIN FREE STUFF?

If your trick is selected as Trick of the Month, you will win a free GameShark provided by InterAct, and a Pro Shock, or a Hyper64, or a VIPER controller from Fire International. If you are given credit for submitting a hot trick in this section, you will win a free game. see page 171 for rules.

Note: If you send your trick by e-mail, you must include your real name and address.

Send your best tricks, codes, Web sites, anything that can help make games more fun or interesting to:

Tricks of the Trade
P.O. Box 3338
Oak Brook IL
60522-3338

or send e-mail to:

tricks@zd.com

NINTENDO 64

Monopoly

Hidden Character, Zoom, Game Difficulty

1 **Potato Head**
When choosing to add players to the game, go to the Select a Token Screen and choose the Money-Bag. Rename the Money-Bag to Potato and the icon will now be a Potato Head character.

2 **Zoom Control**
Choose any token from the Select A Token Screen and rename it to Wander. In the middle of the game, press Z to bring up the Assets. Now press Up-C and besides rotating the screen with the analog stick, you can press the A button to zoom in and B to reverse the zoom.

Harder Game
When choosing to add players to the game, go to the Select a Token Screen. Rename any icon to Ace and the game will be more difficult by making you land on on spaces and properties where you have to pay.

NBA Showtime: NBA on NBC

Play as Mascots

On the Choose Option Screen, select the Enter Initials option. When asked to Enter Name for Record Keeping, choose "Yes." Now put in the name and pin number for the team of your choice.

The Hawks: HAWK / 0322
The Hornets: HORNET / 1105
The Bulls: BENNY / 0503
The Nuggets: ROCKY / 0201
The Rockets: TURBO / 1111
The Pacers: BOOMER / 0604
The Timberwolves: CRUNCH / 0503
The Nets: SLY / 6765
The Suns: GORILA / 0314
The Sonics: SASQUA / 7785
The Raptors: RAPTOR / 1020
The Jazz: BEAR / 1228

COOL DEX DRIVE SITES

PlayStation:
http://skyscraper.fortunecity.com/rhapsody/821/download/dexindex.html
http://www.geocities.com/dexland_9000/
http://www.psxmax.com/cheats/dex/index.html

Nintendo 64:
http://members.aol.com/Big16mike/UVW/N64/DEXDRIVE/index.htm
http://pages.sssnet.com/daringone/n64lair/dexsaves/
http://www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/Corridor/8554/N64Saves.html

Paperboy

Tons of Codes

From the Main Menu Screen, go to the options. On the Options Screen, go to Secret Codes. Now enter any one of the codes shown below for various results.

Faster Movement
Put in RUSH for your password.

Slower Movement
Put in WAKING for your password.

Can't See Far
Put in MAGOO for your password.

Obstacles Are Invisible
Put in JUMBLE for your password.

Obstacles Scream When Hit
Put in SCREAM for your password.

1 **Newspapers Are Huge**
Put in SUNDAY for your password.

Unlimited Newspapers
Put in NOBUNDLE for your password.

See Every Headline
Put in HEADLINE for your password.

Paperboy Can't Get Hit
Put in INVINC for your password.

Choose Your Level
Put in MAXSUBS for your password.

Super Jump Springs
Put in ALLJUMP for your password.

2 **High Jump**
Put in MOON for your password.

Tiny Paperboy/Papergirl
Put in LITTLE for your password

TOP 10 TRICKS

The top 10 games of the last month given the full-on *Trickman* treatment:

1. Donkey Kong 64 (N64)

Arcade Donkey Kong
First complete DK's Barrel Blast inside Frantic Factory. Then a lever will appear. Grab the lever in front of the Donkey Kong Arcade game to play it. Now you must win the game by beating all of the stages (four in all). After you do this, beat the game once more to obtain the Nintendo Coin. Now, take pictures of six fairies with your camera. After returning to the Main Menu, go to the Mystery Menu and you will see an option to play the Arcade Donkey Kong game at any time!

2. Pokémon (Yellow) (GB)

Easy Level Gain
To easily gain experience, switch the Pokémon you want to train with the top Pokémon on your list. When you go into battle, this Pokémon will appear. Switch to another Pokémon. Once you win the battle, the beginning Pokémon and the fighting Pokémon both gain experience points. This is especially useful if the Pokémon you want to build up has no initial attack in its first form.

3. Pokémon (Red) (GB)

Fight Safari Zone Pokémon
This will allow you to fight and catch the Safari Zone Pokémon outside the Safari Zone. To begin, you must have a Pokémon with the Surf Ability. Now go to the Safari Zone and enter the area where the Pokémon you are trying to catch is found. Stay in the section until the time runs out. Go to the Seafoam Islands by surfing south of Fuchsia City. Be sure you don't encounter any enemies on the way, or the trick won't work (this does not include the Pokémon in the water on the way there). On the edge of the islands, there is a strip of the screen that is half land, and half water. Now, surf on this section and just keep going up and down on it. When you run into an enemy, it will be the Pokémon from the Safari Zone section you just left. This time though, you will be able to fight them and use the other Balls.

cont. on pg. 161

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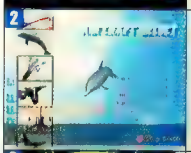
Hey kids! Hankerin' for some video game news in between issues of *Electronic Gaming Monthly*? Well, get on down to [illegible] for all the latest info!

TOP 5 SKY HIGH TRICKS

Aerofighters Assault (N64)

Extra Pilot and Plane

At the Title Screen (not the Main Menu Screen), press Left-C, Down-C, Right-C, Up-C, Left-C, Right-C, Down-C. Now check in the Plane Select Screen on the far left to see the new plane.



Aerowings (DC)

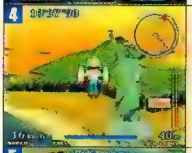
Cheat Mode

At the "Press Start" Screen, press L-Trigger+R-Trigger simultaneously. You will hear a voice say, "OK, good." This will unlock Exhibition Mode, all levels, airplanes and more!

Bogey Dead 6 (PS)

Timer Trick

When the "Now Loading" screen appears (after Plane/Weapon Selections Screens, but before the mission starts), press and hold L1, L2, R1, R2, X, Circle, Triangle, Square, Left. Keep the buttons held until you begin the mission for an increase to 999 seconds!



Pilot Wings (N64)

Birdman in New York

Choose the Rocket Belt and pick the Class A level. Choose a character, fly to the ocean and go north along the shore to the next city. You will notice a greenish building. Find the side entrance and go in. Now you're in New York! Grab the star to turn into the birdman.

Warhawk (PS)

Thor and Kali Mode

At the Main Menu, highlight "Special Access." In the Code Screen, enter these button sequences: Thor Mode - Square, Circle, Square, Square, Triangle, X, Triangle, Triangle. Kali Mode - X, Circle, Circle, Square, X, Triangle, Circle, Triangle.

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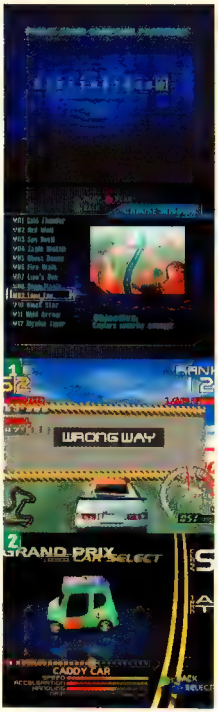


Rainbow Six

Choose Your Starting Level

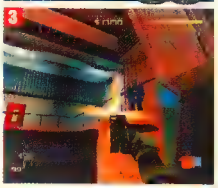
On the Title/Menu Screen, choose the Quick Start option. When entering the campaign password, use the analog stick and put in VZRFTMQ2G8SQ. On the Choose Mission Screen, you can choose between 12 missions!

Ridge Racer 64

Reverse Track and Hidden Caddy Car

1. Choose Grand Prix from the Main Menu. Using a fast car on the first course, wait for the countdown, then turn around and drive into the wall. Keep hitting it until you drive through the wall. Now race the track backward!

2. Finish this race in first place and you will be rewarded with the Caddy Car. Check out this car's speed!



PLAYSTATION

Cool Boarders 4

All Mountains and Events

Go to the Name Entry Screen and put in the following passcodes to access these cheats. You will hear a voice say, "Hey, no cheating" to confirm correct code entry.

1. **Every Mountain Available** ICHEAT
2. **Every Special Event Available** IMSPECIAL

Fighting Force 2

Level Select, Unlimited Ammo and Invincibility

3. When you see the Title Screen with "Press Start" flashing, press and simultaneously hold L1+L2+R1+Triangle+X+Left. Keep them held until you see the Level Select Screen appear. From here you may choose your starting level. While playing the level, you will notice that you have unlimited ammunition and attacks won't decrease your energy. The only thing that can hurt you is fire.

Knockout Kings 2000

Throbbing Heads, Mills Lane

1 **Pulsating Heads**
Go into Career Mode and create a new boxer. When asked to enter your name, put in THROB and then select your Gym. You will see the boxer's head shrink and grow repeatedly.

2 **Unlock Mills Lane**
Go into Exhibition and fight a match in any weight class. During the fight, you must be disqualified by giving your opponent a kick to the stomach three times. This is accomplished by pressing Triangle+Square+Circle+X simultaneously. Once the match is called, you will be taken back to the Exhibition Screen. Choose the Middleweight class and scroll over until you see Mills Lane with boxing gloves!

Marvel Vs. Capcom

Hidden EX Option

Press START at the Title Screen and when the Main Menu appears, highlight "Option," press and hold SELECT and while holding it, press START. The EX option will appear. Here you may choose your vitality recovery speed, a full hyper combo gauge and more!

RC Stunt Copter

Cool Codes

On the Title Screen or the Main Menu, enter one of these codes to unlock many cool cheats. You will hear a voice say, "Cheaters never prosper" once the trick is entered correctly.

All Levels Open
Down, Up, Right, Left, Triangle, X, Square, Circle.

Mega Points
L2, R2, L1, R1, Triangle, Circle, X, Square.

All the Gold Medals
Down, Up, Left, Right, Triangle, X, Square, Circle.

Spyro 2: Ripto's Rage

Multiple Codes

In the middle of the game, press START to pause. Now enter any of these button codes for these results. You will hear a sound to confirm that you entered the code correctly.

1 **Big Head**
Up, Up, Up, Up, R1, R1, R1, R1, Circle.

2 **PaRappa (Flat) Mode**
Left, Right, Left, Right, L2, R2, L2, R2, Square.

All Abilities
Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Square.

View Credits
Square, Circle, Square, Circle, Square, Circle, Left, Right, Left, Right, Left, Right.

Supercross 2000

Tons of Codes

1 From the "Select Event" Screen, have Quick Race highlighted and then press R1. Now enter the following passcodes for these results. You'll hear a sound to confirm correct code entry.

2 **The Bikes Never Crash** NoCR4SH
Giants on Mini-Bikes G14NTS
Supercross on Mercury M3RCVRY
Supercross on Venus V3NVS
Supercross on the Moon MooN
Supercross on Mars M4RS
Supercross on Jupiter JVP1T3R
Supercross on Saturn S4TVRN
Supercross on Uranus VR4NVS
Supercross on Neptune N3PTVN3
Supercross on Pluto PLVTo
Add Hop Button HoP
Extra Camera Modes MoR3C4MS
Just the Bikes NoR1D3RS
Lookout Ichabod! H34DL3SS
All Riders Get in Your Way BLoCKM3
No More Off Track NooFFTR4CK
No More Getting Reset SK1PP1NGoK
Bigger Dirt Spray B1GSPR4Y

TOP 10 TRICKS (CONTINUED)

4. Gran Turismo 2 (PS)

Find Codes
Send in codes for this game. If we print yours, you'll score a free game!

5. Pokémon (Blue) (GB)

Find Codes
Send in codes for this game. If we print yours, you'll score a free game!

6. Tomorrow Never Dies (PS)

Health Restoration
During the game, press Start to pause. Then press Select, Select, Circle, Circle, Up, Up, Select.

7. Tony Hawk's Pro Skater (PS)

Awesome Codes
Enter the following cheats while paused during play. If you entered these correctly, the screen will shake.
Big Head Mode
Hold L1 and press Left, Up, X, Down, Up, X.
Special Available Anytime
Hold L1 and press Square, Up, Left, Up, Circle, Triangle.
Get 10X Multiplier
Hold L1 and press Triangle, X, Triangle.
Get 13X Multiplier
Hold L1 and press X, Square, Square, Triangle, Up, Down.
Slow Mo
Hold L1 and press Left, Square, Left, Square, Left, Square, Left.
Get All Practice Mode Levels
Hold L1 and press Square, Up, Left, Up, Circle, Triangle. Quit the level you are playing and go to the menu. You will have all Practice Mode levels.

8. Pokémon Pinball (GB)

Animate Unevolved Pokémon
If you want to animate the Pokémon you've caught, go to the Pokédex and highlight one of the regular, unevolved Pokémon. Now press and hold the Start button to see the character move!

9. Pokémon Snap (N64)

Get Level 7
There is a special rainbow level that will send you to space and let you capture a

TOP 10 TRICKS (CONTINUED)

picture of the infamous Mew! First you must get all of the Pokémon signs in each of the levels. Then Prof. Oak will open up a new level for you where you'll find Mew in a bubble. Stay in the middle and hit him with a pester ball three times as he passes. Then he will appear in the distance, so throw the pester ball ahead of him so he runs into it as he passes. Do this three times. After Mew is out of his bubble, he will be chasing it. Hit him one more time and he'll be stunned. Move in close for a great picture that will get you a huge amount of points!

10. NBA Live 2000 (PS)

Unlock Legends Players

Go to the Create Player Screen. (From Game Setup, press Circle button for the Quick Menu. Scroll down to the player icon, press RIGHT on the D-pad and select the Create Player icon by pressing the X button). Enter the first part of the code or phrase in the FIRST NAME entry field. Press X to accept the name. Then enter the second part of the code or phrase in the LAST NAME entry field. Press X to accept the name. You will be notified after the code is entered that the player has been unlocked. Next, go to UNLOCK LEGENDS Screen. (Press Start to return to Game Setup, then press Circle to bring up the Quick Menu. Scroll down to the STAR icon and press X. This will open the Unlock Legends Screen). To activate a Legend, highlight his name in this screen and hit X. He will appear in the FREE AGENTS POOL, where you can sign him to any empty team slots.

Five Dream Team Legends...
Karl Malone - '90s
First Name - Mailman
Last Name - Delivers
Charles Barkley - '80s
First Name - Mound of
Last Name - Rebound
John Stockton - '90s
First Name - Jazz
Last Name - Man
Reggie Miller - '90s
First Name - Outside
Last Name - Threat
Lenny Wilkins - '60s
First Name - Player
Last Name - Coach

Tarzan

Level Select and Cheat Menu

At Main Menu, enter these:

1 **Level Select**
Left, Left, Right, Right, Up, Down, Left, Right, Up, Up, Down, Down. Now move down past the "Load Game" option and the word, "Cheats" will appear. Access this option to have access to the game levels. Press Right to get the bonus levels.

2 **In-Game Cheat Menu**
Enter "Cheats" on the Main Menu Screen, press L1, R1, L1, R1, L1, R1, L1, R1, L2, R2. Pick a level. Press START to pause. The "Cheat Menu" will appear. Access this option to get access to all letters, mucho fruit, infinite lives, etc.

Tomba 2: The Evil Swine Return

Difficult Mini-Game Clue

During the Trolley Ride, pass the second jump. As you approach a sharp left turn, slow to almost stopped. Lean Tomba to the left and the Trolley will lean to the left also. Balance the Trolley without falling off. Keep leaning around the turn, you will see the Clue on the right-hand side of the track, at the opposite side of the crest in the next left turn. You can see it as you reach the next left. Now, shift Tomba to the right immediately by pressing and holding to the right. If done correctly, Tomba will acquire the last Clue.

Vigilante 8: Second Offense

Awesome Codes

From the Main Menu, choose the Options Screen. From there, press the X button on Game Status, choose your player with X, and then press the L1+R1 buttons simultaneously. From here, you can enter these passcodes for the results shown. You will hear a voice say, "Funky" when they are entered correctly. Each time you complete a code, you will have to press L1+R1 again to enter a new one.

No Enemies
Enter HOME_ALONE for your passcode. Press the X button to complete it.

Monster Wheels
Enter GO_MONSTER for your passcode. Press the X button to complete it.

1 **Suspended Cars**
Enter JACK_IT_UP for your passcode. Press the X button to complete it.

CPU Picks Features
Enter QUICK_PLAY for your passcode. Press the X button to complete it.

Quick Vehicles
Enter MORE_SPEED for your passcode. Press the X button to complete it.

Floating Cars
Enter NO_GRAVITY for your passcode. Press the X button to complete it.

No Wheel Attachment Icons
Enter DRIVE_ONLY for your passcode. Press the X button to complete it.

Sequence of Movies
Enter LONG_MOVIE for your passcode. Press the X button to complete it.

GAME BOY

Armorines: Project S.W.A.R.M.

Cheat Screen

1 From the Title Screen, access the Password option. Now enter BBBBBBBB as your passcode. You will be taken to a Cheat Screen where you may gather power-ups and choose your starting world.

Caterpillar Construction Zone

Stage Select

On the Title Screen, move down to Continue and access it. Now put in your password as BG6S and press the Done option. Now you will be in the game. Press Start and access the Passwords option. You will now have passwords to all the stages and levels in the game. Choose any of these levels and you will automatically begin there.

Puzzle Master

Unlimited Tools

2 On the Title Screen, move down and access the Password option. Now put in CHEAT as your password. Now your number of Adventurer's Tools won't diminish. They will all stay at the number 9.

tricks@zd.com

We want your tricks! We want to include your best codes and tricks in every issue, to put along with all our great tricks we pack in every issue. You can even win prizes if we pick yours as Trick of the Month!
*see page 171 for contest rules

WIN

OVER $25,000 IN PRIZES

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CONTEST #1 - VIDEO GAMES

Sony Playstation Dual Shock, Sega Dreamcast, Game Boy Color, and Nintendo 64 Funtastic Series. Get all four or trade what you don't want for cash. Options include accessories, plenty of games, Sony Playstation 2 and 36" monitor. Base prize package value $1200.

CONTEST #2 - COMPUTER

700 MHz, 128 mb RAM, 27 gig hard drive, 8X DVD-ROM, CD-RW drive, modem and 17" monitor. Options include software and accessories. Base prize package value $2600.

CONTEST #3 - HOME THEATER

60" big screen, 100 watt receiver with Dolby Pro Logic Surround Sound, DVD, 200 CD changer, dual tape, HI-FI VCR and tower speakers. Base prize package value $7475

Make it Happen. All this and more could be yours, in these contests everyone starts out equal. There is no luck involved. You win the prizes by outscoring other players in games of skill. Begin your journey by solving the puzzle below. If you stick it out till the end and have the highest score, you go on a shopping spree and we foot the bill. This first puzzle is easy but it gives you an idea of how the contests work. You will receive full information when you enter. You have been given the opportunity to live your dreams. Are you up to it?

Future Puzzles. For each contest you enter, you will receive by mail three puzzles of the same level as #1. You have three weeks to solve each puzzle. We will award the monies or services for each phase

Typically 78% attain the highest score in phase 1, 65% in phase 2, 39% in phase 3 and 31% in phase 4. The winner will have the highest score after the tie-breaker. Each contest has its own tie-breaker. In the unlikely event that players are still tied, they will split the value of the packages they are playing for.

Directions. Follow the directions below to solve the puzzle. Once the deadline on the entry form to qualify for contest you are entering, [illegible] and send your answer with the money for the contest you are entering. [illegible] won't win if you don't send money. Only one entry per person. Duplicate entries and illegible entries will be disqualified. All entries must be postmarked by [illegible] Judges decisions are final. Where judges are in error the sponsor's liability is limited to the amount of entry fees paid. Elation is not responsible for lost, delayed or stolen mail. Winners will be determined no later than July 01, 2001. This contest is open to residents of the U.S. and Canada only. © 2000 Elation Inc.

PRIZE PUZZLE #1

WORD LIST

TOWER - P	LEGAL - Y
EARTH - X	EMPTY - V
WORLD - U	WATER - T
SPACE - W	COAST - A
HAPPY - O	FIELD - B
SHARE - Z	BLADE - D

DIRECTIONS

Fill in the puzzle with the correct words going across. Transfer each word's corresponding letter to the line at the end. This should spell the secret word going down. HINT. Read the secret word clue.

		T			
H					
B	L	A	D	E	D
			S		
				L	

SECRET WORD ↓ ____

SECRET WORD CLUE:

What comes before tomorrow but after yesterday?

ENTER ME IN THE FOLLOWING CONTESTS:

☐ ($3) Video Game ☐ ($3) Home Theater

☐ ($3) Computer ☐ ($5) All Three - Save $4

Name 101

Address

City State Zip

SEND CASH, MONEY ORDER OR CHECK TO:

ELATION, P.O. BOX 62126 DEPT 953, MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55426

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Clip This Order Form And Mail It

Print Clearly. Fold And Mail It

Value of prize packages as follows: Video Game package $1200 base prize, bonus options $2350, cash options $1250. Computer package $2600 base prize, bonus options $2850, cash options $1250. Home theater package $7475 base prize, bonus options $6375, cash options $1250. For any questions e-mail us at elation@uswest.net.

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Computer Contest. Win a blazing fast computer with 600 Mhz MMX Pentium III, 128 meg. RAM, 36 Gig. HD, DVD, Windows 2000, modem and more!

Video Game Contest. Play on the hi-tech cutting edge with this line-up: Sony Playstation AND Playstation 2!!; Sega Dreamcast!; Game Boy Pocket; and Nintendo 64! Get all four or trade the ones you don't want for CASH! Bonus options include: 33" monitor, $1,000 in games you choose, cash, accessories and more!

Media Rig Contest. The Ultimate Gaming Environment, 60 inch monitor, 130 watt receiver w/ Dolby Digital Surround, DVD and all components shown. Win DSS Satellite Receiver as a BONUS OPTION! This rig will blow you away!!

We're talkin' GAMING HEAVEN!

Directions. Fill in the Mystery Word Grid with words going across that spell out the Mystery Word down the side. Hint: use the Mystery Word Clue.

In the future. For each contest there will be four more puzzles at $2.00 each and one much tougher final at $1.00 which will be sent to you by mail. You will have 3 weeks to solve each puzzle. We don't know how many will play but typically 55% will have the highest score possible score to Phase I, 43% to Phase II, 36% to Phase III, and 32% to Phase IV. Highest score in the final determines the winner. If players are still tied they will split the value of the grand prize they are playing for.

Mystery Word Grid

	H					___
		E				___
P	I	N	C	H	W	MYSTERY
	R					___
S						WORD

WORD LIST and LETTER CODE chart

PINCH .....W	PRESS .....K	BLAST .....A	WRECK .....D
BREAK .....Z	PUNCH .....S	SPRAY C	TURBO V
STOMP .....T	STAND .....R	PRESS .....E	DREAM .....O
CRUSH I	SCORE .....H	SLANT L	CHASE .....P

MYSTERY WORD CLUE:
WORLD RULERS HAVE IT AND IN THIS CONTEST YOU HAVE IT

Yes!

ENTER ME TODAY, HERE'S MY ENTRY FEE:

- ☐ ($3.00) Video Game Contest
- ☐ ($3.00) Media Rig Contest
- ☐ ($3.00) Computer Contest
- ☐ ($5.00) SPECIAL! Enter them all (SAVE $4.00)

CLIP AND MAIL

Name _____ **Age** _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

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Verifiable retail value of the prize packages as follows: Media Rig Contest package $7,012.00 core components shown, bonus options $3,449.00, cash options $1,250.00. Computer Contest package $2,500.00 for computer, bonus options $2,337.00, cash options $1,250.00. Video Game Contest $1,080.00 for systems shown, $3,549.00 bonus options, $1,250.00 cash options.

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PS2: First Impressions

Andrew Burwell

Dan "Shoe" Hsu

Chris Johnston

John Davison

Crispin Boyer

Andrew: It's finally here! I came to work early this Sunday morning hoping to catch a glimpse of the PS2, and I got it. Now that I've seen it though, I'm not sure it's all that it's cracked up to be. I don't know what I was expecting to see, but I know I was expecting more. Graphically, it lives up to my expectations. I was blown away the first time we popped in Ridge Racer V and the demo of Gran Turismo 2000. However, the excitement stopped there. I guess we were led to believe that the machine was invincible, but when playing RRV two-player, you'll see a pea soup-like fog roll onto the course. There is noticeable slowdown on A-Train 6 as well. It may not be invincible, but I did see some nice stuff. For instance, when you drive into a tunnel in RRV, your headlights raise up, turn on and your dash illuminates. That's pretty slick. The PS2 menu system is also really cool, and I like how all the system software is upgradable. Even the backward compatibility for PS1 games is neat. You can set the system to load PS1 games fast and filter the textures to smooth them out. While all that stuff is neat, this system needs better games. The games will be here soon enough, so I guess I'll just have to wait before buying my own PS2.

Shoe: I agree with Mandrew. I couldn't wait to play all the games, but I was fairly disappointed. Ridge V and GT2000 both looked really, really nice, although I wouldn't say those graphics are leaps and bounds over what the DC can do. SFEX3? That looked like total dog poop. The models looked ridiculous compared to those of Soul Calibur. I guess I'll have to wait for Tekken Tag to really compare apples to apples (so I'm comparing two games of the same genre by the same company). The coolest thing about PS2 so far? The texture smoothing bit. We had the machine put the smooth moves on Metal Gear Solid. At first, we couldn't tell the difference (since it's been awhile since we played the game), but we did notice a drop in graphical quality with the option turned off. Whoopee.

Chris: I think with any system launch—especially when it's Japanese—there's bound to be some disappointment. It's like, what Japanese launch has been that impressive? There's usually one or two games that show off the system and then we have to wait a month or so until the real jaw-droppers show up. I'm content with Ridge Racer V, and considering exactly how many polys this machine is pushing, the fog on two-player doesn't bother me that much (not that I'd be playing it two-player much anyway). Since all of these games are first-generation, it doesn't bother me that they don't look amazing (except Ridge, which I think looks brilliant). I'm more excited about what's to come than what's already out. Bring on the second-generation titles!

"The system shows so much potential though, and I can't wait until the 'real' products start to emerge."

John: Because many of the games are so rushed, you could almost say that the launch games aren't even quite 'first-generation PS2 games'—it's almost like they're 'last-generation' PS1 games that have been given a gorgeous lick of paint. Ridge V is by far the most impressive game we have...but even that is basically a gorgeous-looking R4. The system shows so much potential, though, and I can't wait until the 'real' products start to emerge. In the meantime though...I'm completely hooked on Ridge V, and it's the first game in ages where I'll actually sit back and watch the replays.

Crispin: I had a long list of things I wanted to try the second I got my hands on this system. First, I wanted to lift the console, test its heft, see if it feels like cheap tech junk or if it's really worth the bank-busting price. I gotta say, this system feels substantial. And it doesn't look nearly as ugly in real life either. Heck, it's kinda sexy. I actually prefer to stand my PS2 vertically, and I like how you can rotate the PS logo so it always sits upright (good thinking, Sony). I'm even more impressed with the Dual Shock 2. I was skeptical of the pressure-sensitive buttons at first—especially after playing RRV, which offers half-ass support of analog acceleration. But then I played the GT2000 demo. Believe it or not, I got the hang of varying my pressure on the X button pretty quickly. The analog acceleration worked so well that I can't wait to see how other games make use of the pressure-sensing buttons.

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'COLONY WARS III: RED SUN' You play Valdemar a lone military agent who has no loyalties. Revised mission structure & comprehensive menu to customize & upgrade ships & weapons. Battle a huge range of enemies in a fully interactive space environment.

Activision (Shooter)
Release: 3/00
PSX
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RESIDENT EVIL: CODE VERONICA' The nightmare plague now spreads to Dreamcast. Command Claire Redfield as she searches for her missing brother. Chris Graphics so real, so terrifying, you'll beg to keep the lights on. New 1st Person perspective battles take you directly into the horrifying drama.

Capcom (Adventure)
Release: 3/00
Dreamcast
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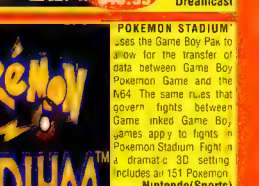

POKEMON STADIUM Uses the Game Boy Pak to allow for the transfer of data between Game Boy Pokemon Game and the N64. The same rules that govern fights between Game inked Game Boy games apply to fights in Pokemon Stadium Fight in a dramatic 3D setting. Includes an 151 Pokemon.

Nintendo(Sports)
Release: 3/00
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POKEMON: TRADING CARD GAME' Build & refine your deck, trade cards with your friends & become a Pokemon Trading Card Game Master. Defeat the 4 Grand Masters by collecting, trading & dueling. Use the Link cable to duel a friend or create a new card using the infrared Card Pop.

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Game Boy Color
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'PERFECT DARK' is a first person shooter with a riveting plot line set in the near future. Control special operative Joanna Dark as she completes missions & wastes tons of bad guys. Motion captured villains, dynamic lighting & explosive effects, surround sound and 3 difficulty levels with increasingly smarter AI in each stage. Single or multiplayer action.

Nintendo (Adventure)
Release: 4/00
N64
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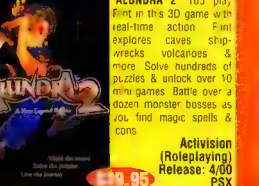


ALUNDRA 2' You play Flint in this 3D game with real-time action. Flint explores caves, shipwrecks, volcanoes & more. Solve hundreds of puzzles & unlock over 10 mini games. Battle over a dozen monster bosses as you find magic spells & icons.

Activision (Roleplaying)
Release: 4/00
PSX
$39.95

NEXT MONTH

June 2000

On sale May 9

EXCLUSIVE!
Sonic Adventure 2

Sonic Adventure 2: An exclusive first look at the first major Dreamcast sequel. We'll have the first screenshots and info that you'll see anywhere on the next mega-hit for Dreamcast.

PLUS!: **Phantasy Star Online:** Could this be the first console game to match the scale of EverQuest or Ultima Online for the PC? Sega shows us the first screens and details of this huge game. Do yo remember the old Phantasy Stars?

And don't miss our coverage of **PlayStation2 Mania!** It's finally out in Japan, and developers around the world are finally able to unveil what they've been working on. We'll bring you all the info and screenshots we can lay our hands on.

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

- **Pre-E3 Games Frenzy.** E3 is the games industry equivalent to the Cannes or Sundance Film Festivals. Everything for the rest of the year will be on show in L.A. in May and we'll have an early rundown on what is expected to be shown.
- **Nintendo's Dolphin.** When are they going to show us something?
- **Perfect Dark...reviewed at last?**
- **Tons of Tricks for all systems!**

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

May 2000

On sale April 11

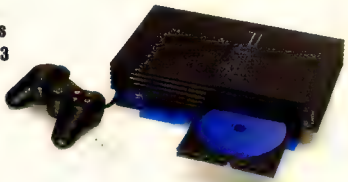
Demo Disc

Playables
- MediEvil 2
- Speed Punks
- NCAA March Madness 2000
- Rugrats Studio Tour
- NASCAR Rumble

Non Playables
- MLB 2001
- Vagrant Story
- Sarge's Heroes
- Front Mission 3
- Road Rash: Jail Break

PlayStation2!

PlayStation2. *OPM* brings you the biggest, most comprehensive coverage ever of Sony's new super-system, complete with hands-on previews of all the games that will revolutionize the way you look at your TV. Plus all the latest PlayStation reviews, including **Alundra 2**, **Triple Play 2001** and **Gauntlet Legends**.



EXPERT GAMER

May 2000

On sale April 18

Resident Evil Code: Veronica

Don't walk, run, to pick up the hottest Dreamcast game this year—**Resident Evil Code: Veronica**. *Expert Gamer* has the best maps and strategies to keep you alive in Capcom's first DC "thrillah." Once you're through with that, lace up your skates for **NHL 2K**. *XG* will have you skating circles around the competition. The fun continues with **Pokémon Stadium**, as *XG* gives you the goods on the big N's latest monster-fest. Plus, don't miss game-busting strategies for **Alundra 2**, **Front Mission 3**, **The Misadventures of Tron Bonne** and more.

- **Resident Evil Code: Veronica secrets revealed**
- **Offensive and defensive tactics for NHL 2K**
- **Front Mission 3 guide**
- **Alundra 2 walk-through**

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Official Contest and Sweepstakes Rules

Trick of the Month

1. **No Purchase Necessary:** To enter, send a letter or standard-size postcard with your preferred codes or privileges for one of the Tricks of the Month to: P.O. Box 13351, Des Plaines, IL 60018 or e-mail us at totm@zd.com. Be sure to include your name, address, and phone number. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. One entry per household. Entries must be received by April 15, 2000.

All entries become the property of Sponsors and will not be returned or acknowledged. Sponsors assume no responsibility for lost, misdirected, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due or misdelivered entries. Sponsors reserve the right to cancel the contest at any time without prior notice. Only one prize per family, organization or household per issue. Winning entries may be printed in EGM and/or ExpertGamer. However, only one prize shall be awarded.

2. **Prizes.** Each Prize winner will receive the game and hint guide listed in the issue and as a video game gift certificate valued at approximately $50. Each Prize has an approximate total value of $50.00. The best Trick submitted by the Trick Deadline each month will be declared the Trick Winner. One Grand Prize winner will receive a Nintendo 64 system. Prize awards are subject to availability. Substitution of Prizes, in whole or in part, made at the sole discretion of Sponsors, will be permitted if a Prize winner fails to be selected, is ineligible, or fails to claim a Prize. Prizes are non-transferable. Winners of the Trick Grand Prize shall be responsible for any gift certificate redemption fees, taxes and other costs associated with the receipt or use of the Prize. By accepting a Prize, winners agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for publicity, advertising, trade or promotional purposes by the Sponsors, without additional compensation, unless prohibited by law. Employees of ZD Inc., Intelliquis, Inc. and their respective affiliates and their families (collectively, "ZD Inc. Affiliates") are not eligible to win Prizes. ZD Inc. Affiliates, Nintendo of America Inc. and companies responsible for the advertising, sale, manufacture, distribution or marketing of the Prizes (collectively, "Prize Companies") are not responsible for any damages, losses or expenses that assume a significant degree of risk in connection with the receipt or use of Prizes. Winners participating in the Grand Prize trip agree to sign an affidavit of eligibility and liability release within five days of receipt of their prize. By acceptance of a Prize, winners agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for publicity, advertising, trade or promotional purposes by the Prize Companies, unless prohibited by law. Employees of ZD Inc., Intelliquis, Inc. and their respective affiliates and their families (collectively, "ZD Inc. Affiliates") are not eligible to win Prizes. ZD Inc. Affiliates, Nintendo of America Inc. and companies responsible for the advertising, sale, manufacture, distribution or marketing of the Prizes (collectively, "Prize Companies") are not responsible for any damages, losses or expenses that assume a significant degree of risk in connection with the receipt or use of Prizes. Winners participating in the Grand Prize trip agree to sign an affidavit of eligibility and liability release within five days of receipt of their prize. By acceptance of a Prize, winners agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for publicity, advertising, trade or promotional purposes by the Sponsors, without additional compensation, unless prohibited by law. Employees of ZD Inc., Intelliquis, Inc. and their respective affiliates and their families (collectively, "ZD Inc. Affiliates") are not eligible to win Prizes. ZD Inc. Affiliates, Nintendo of America Inc. and companies responsible for the advertising, sale, manufacture, distribution or marketing of the Prizes (collectively, "Prize Companies") are not responsible for any damages, losses or expenses that assume a significant degree of risk in connection with the receipt or use of Prizes. Winners participating in the Grand Prize trip agree to sign an affidavit of eligibility and liability release within five days of receipt of their prize. By acceptance of a Prize, winners agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for publicity, advertising, trade or promotional purposes by the Sponsors, without additional compensation, unless prohibited by law. Employees of ZD Inc., Intelliquis, Inc. and their respective affiliates and their families (collectively, "ZD Inc. Affiliates") are not eligible to win Prizes. ZD Inc. Affiliates, Nintendo of America Inc. and companies responsible for the advertising, sale, manufacture, distribution or marketing of the Prizes (collectively, "Prize Companies") are not responsible for any damages, losses or expenses that assume a significant degree of risk in connection with the receipt or use of Prizes. Winners participating in the Grand Prize trip agree to sign an affidavit of eligibility and liability release within five days of receipt of their prize. By acceptance of a Prize, winners agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for publicity, advertising, trade or promotional purposes by the Sponsors, without additional compensation, unless prohibited by law.

3. **Odds of Winning:** The number of winners and the odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received.

4. **Eligibility:** Contest open to residents of United States and Canada (void in Quebec). Non-compliance with time frame guidelines listed herein or return of any prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification. Winners of the Trick Grand Prize trip must sign affidavit of eligibility, release of liability and publicity within five days of receipt of notification. By acceptance of prize, winners agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for publicity, advertising, trade or promotional purposes by the Sponsors, without additional compensation, unless prohibited by law. Employees of ZD Inc., Intelliquis, Inc. and their respective affiliates and their families (collectively, "ZD Inc. Affiliates") are not eligible to win Prizes. ZD Inc. Affiliates, Nintendo of America Inc. and companies responsible for the advertising, sale, manufacture, distribution or marketing of the Prizes (collectively, "Prize Companies") are not responsible for any damages, losses or expenses that assume a significant degree of risk in connection with the receipt or use of Prizes. Winners participating in the Grand Prize trip agree to sign an affidavit of eligibility and liability release within five days of receipt of their prize. By acceptance of a Prize, winners agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for publicity, advertising, trade or promotional purposes by the Sponsors, without additional compensation, unless prohibited by law. Employees of ZD Inc., Intelliquis, Inc. and their respective affiliates and their families (collectively, "ZD Inc. Affiliates") are not eligible to win Prizes. ZD Inc. Affiliates, Nintendo of America Inc. and companies responsible for the advertising, sale, manufacture, distribution or marketing of the Prizes (collectively, "Prize Companies") are not responsible for any damages, losses or expenses that assume a significant degree of risk in connection with the receipt or use of Prizes. Winners participating in the Grand Prize trip agree to sign an affidavit of eligibility and liability release within five days of receipt of their prize. By acceptance of a Prize, winners agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for publicity, advertising, trade or promotional purposes by the Sponsors, without additional compensation, unless prohibited by law. Employees of ZD Inc., Intelliquis, Inc. and their respective affiliates and their families (collectively, "ZD Inc. Affiliates") are not eligible to win Prizes. ZD Inc. Affiliates, Nintendo of America Inc. and companies responsible for the advertising, sale, manufacture, distribution or marketing of the Prizes (collectively, "Prize Companies") are not responsible for any damages, losses or expenses that assume a significant degree of risk in connection with the receipt or use of Prizes. Winners participating in the Grand Prize trip agree to sign an affidavit of eligibility and liability release within five days of receipt of their prize. By acceptance of a Prize, winners agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for publicity, advertising, trade or promotional purposes by the Sponsors, without additional compensation, unless prohibited by law.

Letter of the Month

1. **No Purchase Necessary:** To enter, send your letter to EGM Letters, P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338, or e-mail us at EGM@zd.com. Make sure to include your name, address and phone number. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. Entries must be received by the 10th day of the month for the next available issue of EGM. Sponsors assume no responsibility for lost, misdirected, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due or misdelivered entries. Contest open to residents of United States and Canada. Void in Quebec.

2. **Prizes.** One Grand Prize winner will receive one of the following prizes at Sponsor's sole option: One (1) SharkPad Pro 64, for free. One (1) Blockuda for Game Boy Color. One (1) Eclipse Stick for Saturn. Grand Prize has an approximate retail value of $50 (U.S.). Winners will be selected by the Letters Editor, whose decisions are final. Winners shall be selected from all valid entries received. Entries shall be judged on the following criteria: Originality, style and topicality. Judging to be held on or about the 15th day of each month. A prize winner's name will not be published. Prizes are non-transferable. No substitutions of prizes are allowed, except at the option of Sponsors should the featured prizes become unavailable. The odds of winning will be determined by the number of valid entries received. No purchase or payment is required to win. Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply. FOR AN LIST OF ALL WINNERS OF THIS RULES, SEND A SELF-ADDRESSED, STAMPED ENVELOPE TO: "LETTER OF THE MONTH" CONTEST RULES, P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338.

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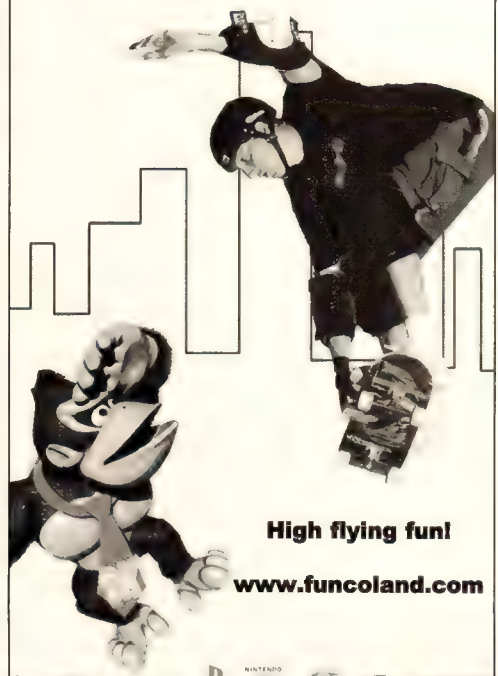

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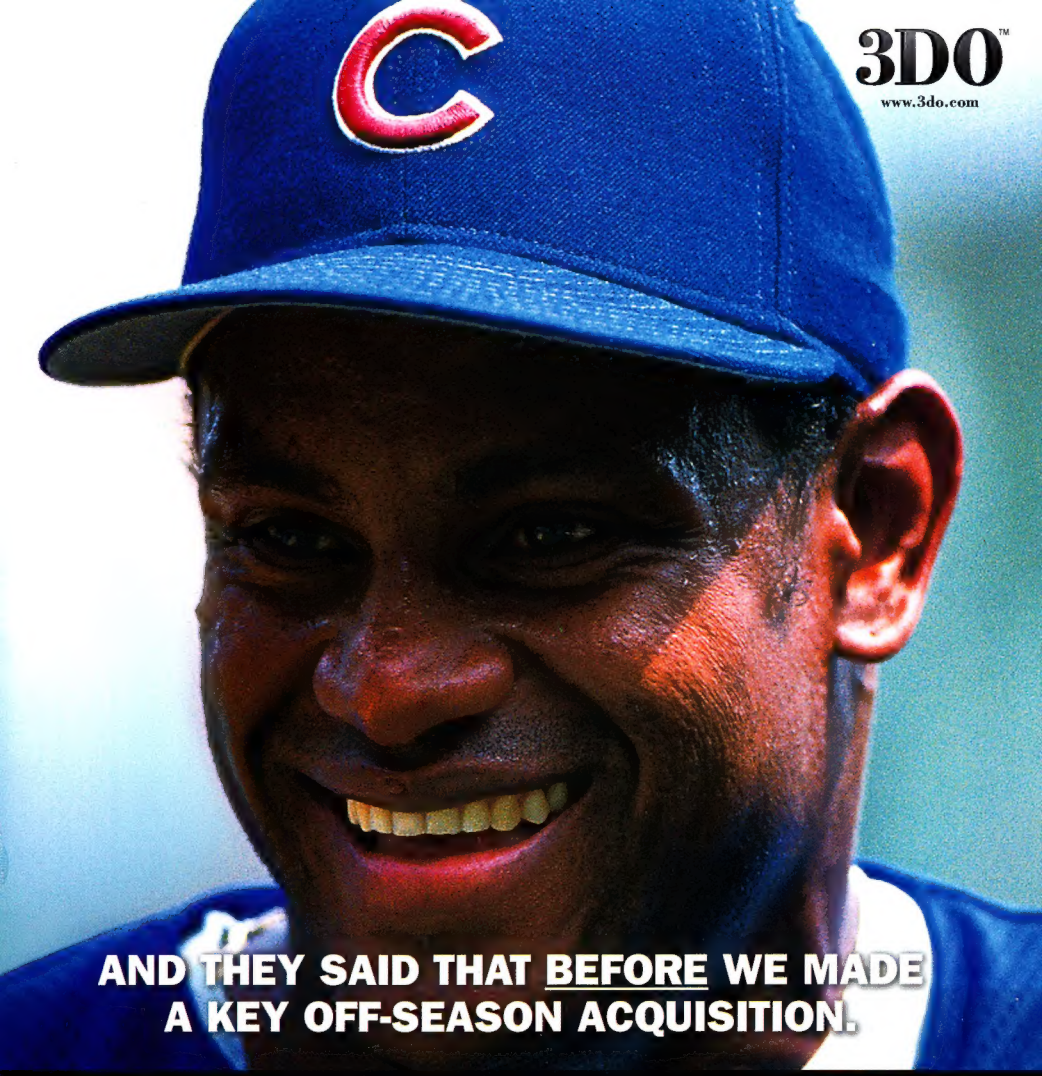

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So I was down 2-1 with under a minute left in the third. He was in my end, burning up the clock, passing the puck around like a plate of hot buffalo wings. So I drilled him into the boards, chipped it loose, and we go screaming up the ice. My winger is flying down the side, and I feed him. He fires it across to Shanahan. Shanahan snaps it to me. I hear the slap, and then it's like everything slows down. I see the little knots on the net and the scratches on the pipes, I see that biscuit spinning, the GOALIE TWISTING, FALLING, ICE SPRAYING UP OFF HIS SKATES, AND I WONDER IS THIS JUST A VIDEO GAME? I mean, go to sega.com/games and then you tell me. All I'm saying is, the next thing I know I'm getting called for boarding my brother into the brickwork on the fireplace. You've gotta be kidding me. Like that's a penalty? Come on man, my skates never left the ice ...

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